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House leaders racing the clock on govt. spending bill

By ANDREW TAYLOR
Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — The Senate's top Republican issued a downbeat assessment of talks on a government spending bill Wednesday, warning that it will require a "laser focus from both parties and both chambers" to meet next week's deadline and avert a federal shutdown. Across the Capitol, House Speaker Nancy Pelosi met with Hispanic lawmakers

about the upcoming appropriations measure, which is likely to largely maintain President Donald Trump's tactical ability to fund his much-sought border wall. "To be frank, only a laser focus from both parties and both chambers on getting results will create a path to pass appropriations bills this year," Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell said.

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House Republican Leader Kevin McCarthy, R-Calif., speaks to reporters after Speaker of the House Nancy Pelosi, D-Calif., announced earlier that the House is moving forward to draft articles of impeachment against President Donald Trump, at the Capitol in Washington, Thursday, Dec. 5, 2019.

Associated Press



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House Speaker Nancy Pelosi of Calif., accompanied by Chairman of the House Ways and Means Committee Richard Neal, D-Mass., left, and other House members, speaks at a news conference to discuss the United States Mexico Canada Agreement (USMCA) trade agreement, Tuesday, Dec. 10, 2019, on Capitol Hill in Washington.

Associated Press

Continued from Front

"There simply is not time left for my Democratic friends to continue haggling over ... poison pills, partisan policy riders and presidential

transfer authorities."

As is often the case, California rivals Pelosi and Kevin McCarthy are feuding, this time about a long-shot McCarthy bid for additional funding for a controversial

House leaders racing the clock on govt. spending bill

dam project that would provide more water for Central Valley farmers. Nobody wants a government shutdown when a stopgap spending bill expires at the end of next week, but time is running out and it's not at all certain that negotiations can close in time for the Senate to process a year-end spending package. Another temporary funding bill, called a continuing resolution, or CR, could be needed to avert a repeat of last year's 35-day partial federal shutdown.

At issue is the almost one-third of the federal budget passed by Congress each year for day-to-day operations of federal agencies.

This year's annual appropriations cycle was supposed to be relatively easy after this summer's budget and debt deal reversed a sharp set of spending cuts that would have otherwise struck both the Pentagon and domestic agencies. But a Senate GOP move to more than triple a key border wall account to meet Trump's demands sparked a two-month stalemate. Negotiations are back on track, with most of Trump's \$5 billion wall demand being returned to other domestic accounts.

It's complicated, but Trump has a significant tactical advantage that allows him to obtain several billion dollars for his border project. That's because he will refuse to sign any bill that denies his wall request outright or curtails his powers to transfer money from Pentagon accounts to border construction. Another option is to keep the Homeland Security Department budget largely frozen under a continuing resolution while maintaining those same transfer authorities that Trump has used to shift almost \$7 billion to wall accounts even as Congress directly appropriates far less — \$1.4 billion for the 2019 budget year. Nobody wants the third option: a government shutdown battle.

The no-win spot that anti-wall forces find themselves in promises to generate unrest among some progressives, though they may be reluctant to give leaders much blowback during the height of impeachment. For their part, conservatives usually just oppose the annual spending bills, which are then reluctantly signed

by Trump after last-minute drama.

House Democrats sought to block Trump's power to transfer Pentagon funding to Trump's project, but his veto threats are likely to succeed in getting Democrats to drop the language in the closed-door talks. Negotiators on a separate \$738 billion Pentagon policy bill dumped companion language in their House-Senate talks.

But funding through transferring money from other accounts is subject to legal challenges. A federal judge in Texas on Tuesday issued a nationwide injunction to block Trump from using \$3.6 billion in military base construction funds to pay for border fencing and other barriers.

Democrats griped that Republicans were slow to make concessions on more than 100 items that were in dispute, citing as an example House GOP leader McCarthy's effort to win additional money for a long-stalled dam project that's opposed by environmentalists.

Republicans countered that Democrats were slow to give up their pet priorities as well and that some of their demands should be deemed poison pills and dropped automatically. The delays have pushed back deadlines. House action on the spending package won't occur until next week, when impeachment and a major trade bill are also on the agenda. Leaders hope the Senate could follow and complete action by the end of next week, but any individual senator could mess up the plan under the Senate's rules. □

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Watchdog: 'Basic and fundamental errors' in Russia probe

By ERIC TUCKER and MICHAEL BALSAMO
Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — The Justice Department's internal watchdog told Congress on Wednesday that he is concerned that "so many basic and fundamental errors" were made by the FBI as it investigated ties between the Trump campaign and Russia. Inspector General Michael Horowitz's testimony before the Senate Judiciary Committee comes two days after the release of a report that identified significant problems with applications to receive and renew warrants to eavesdrop on a former Trump campaign aide in 2016 and 2017. Despite those problems, the report also found that the FBI's actions were not motivated by partisan bias and that the investigation was opened for a proper cause. "I think the activities we found don't vindicate anybody who touched" the warrant applications, Horowitz said. The partisan responses to his report were on display

from the outset of the hearing. The Democratic and Republican leaders of the committee highlighted the findings they found most favorable to the points they wanted to make. Democrats have seized on the inspector general's conclusion that the investigation was not tainted by political motivations. But Republicans say the findings show the investigation was fatally flawed. Attorney General William Barr, a vocal defender of President Donald Trump, said the FBI investigation was based on a "bogus narrative" and he declined to rule out that agents may have acted in bad faith. Horowitz told senators that the FBI failed to follow its own standards for accuracy and completeness when it sought a warrant from the secretive Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Court to monitor the communications of ex-campaign aide Carter Page. The report detailed 17 errors and omissions during those wiretap applications, including failing to tell



Department of Justice Inspector General Michael Horowitz arrives for a Senate Judiciary Committee hearing on the Inspector General's report on alleged abuses of the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act, Wednesday, Dec. 11, 2019, on Capitol Hill in Washington.



Associated Press

the court when questions about raised about the reliability of some of the information that it had presented to receive the warrants. "We are deeply concerned that so many basic and fundamental errors were made by three separate, hand-picked investigative teams, on one of the most sensitive FBI investigations, after the matter had been briefed to the highest levels within the FBI," Horowitz said.

Those problems were especially alarming because the warrant to monitor Page "related so closely to an ongoing presidential campaign" and "even though those involved with the investigation knew that their actions were likely to be subjected to close scrutiny." The committee chairman, GOP Sen. Lindsey Graham of South Carolina, echoed that sentiment in his opening statement. He said the

code name for the FBI investigation, "Crossfire Hurricane," was an apt title "because that's what we ended up with — a 'Crossfire Hurricane.'" "What happened here is the system failed. People in the highest levels of government took the law into their own hands," said Graham, a close Trump ally. Sen. Dianne Feinstein of California, the top Democrat on the committee, said, "I believe strongly that it's time to move on from the false claims of political bias." Horowitz's opening statement was overwhelmingly critical of the investigation, focusing more on the flaws that his report identified than his finding about the absence of partisan bias. Besides the errors in the warrant application process, he pointedly noted that the FBI had not consulted with the Justice Department before using informants to interact with Trump campaign aides during the investigation, though he also said no policy required it to do so. □

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Washington state OKs some of the nation's toughest OT rules

By **GENE JOHNSON**
Associated Press

SEATTLE (AP) — Washington state is adopting some of the nation's most aggressive overtime rules, restoring protections for hundreds of thousands of salaried workers and taking what supporters say is a crucial step toward rebuilding the middle class.

The Department of Labor and Industries finalized the rules Wednesday and will phase them in by 2028. By that time, salaried workers making up to about \$83,400 a year will be entitled to time-and-a-half pay if they work more than 40 hours per week.

Workers making more than that could also get overtime unless they are certain types of professionals — such as those with higher degrees — or unless they are truly managers or executives, as demonstrated by their ability to hire and fire, direct other people's work or make significant business decisions.

Many job categories will be affected, including shift managers at restaurants and retail establishments, office managers, some medical workers and other white-collar staff, officials said.

"We need to make sure the middle class shares in our state's prosperity," Washington Gov. Jay Inslee said in a news release. "Overtime protections ensure workers are fairly compensated when they work more than 40 hours in a given week — time that would otherwise be spent with their families and in their communities." Employees who are paid hourly have long been entitled to overtime. But salaried workers have generally been entitled to it only if they make less than a certain amount: about \$23,660



Washington state Labor and Industries Director Joel Sacks, left, and Deputy Director Elizabeth Smith talk about new overtime rules during a news conference Wednesday, Dec. 11, 2019, in Tukwila, Wash.

Associated Press

under federal law, or more where state laws are more generous.

Those thresholds may have worked decades ago, when they meant that nearly two-thirds of salaried workers nationally were covered by overtime protections. But after a recession in the 1970s, lawmakers largely stopped updating them. Washington's has been stuck at \$13,000 since 1976. As people's salaries rose with inflation, they found themselves no longer eligible for overtime. Businesses have also been able to convert hourly workers into salaried ones who make just more than the threshold as a way to avoid hiring additional staff or paying overtime.

In other cases, workers have been classified as managers when their actual duties more closely resemble those of hourly workers, officials said. By some estimates, as few as 7% of salaried workers across the country are now entitled to overtime.

The federal government and several states, including California, New York, Pennsylvania, Colorado,

Michigan and Massachusetts, have recently updated or started to update their overtime rules, but none have adopted a target threshold as high as Washington's, said Paul Sonn, state policy program director with the National Employment Law Project. The rules adopted by the Trump administration will raise the threshold to cover workers making up to \$35,308 a year — a significant cut from the \$47,000 limit proposed by the Obama administration.

"The overtime threshold is to the middle class as the minimum wage is to low-wage workers," said Nick Hanauer, a Seattle venture capitalist whose think tank, Civic Ventures, advocates for progressive economic policies. "It is the indispensable labor protection for middle class people." Business groups in Washington have agreed that the state's rules needed to be updated, but they criticized the plans as drastic. The Association of Washington Business warned when the proposed rules came out in June that they would be a shock to many busi-

nesses and that they could particularly hurt nonprofits. The organization said many businesses might convert salaried workers to hourly ones, reducing scheduling flexibility.

After hearing extensive public comment, the department added two years to the phase-in period. The threshold will increase incrementally until it reaches 2.5 times the minimum wage — about \$83,400 —

by 2028. The rules will phase in more slowly for businesses with fewer than 50 employees.

The department estimates that by the time they are fully implemented, the new rules will give overtime protections to about 260,000 workers who don't have them and strengthen overtime protections for about 235,000 others. Affected workers will also become eligible for sick leave and retaliation protections.

Under the new rules, that worker will be paid overtime for the additional hours, or the business will need to hire additional staff. Among those who might be helped is Victor Duran, a co-manager of a sports apparel store south of Seattle. He said he makes about \$52,000 a year and doesn't get overtime, but is required to work at least 45 hours per week — and up to 60 during the holidays.

"We say bye to the family at the beginning of the season and say we'll see them after Christmas," Duran said. □

Official: Cruise ship could house 1,000 Oakland homeless

OAKLAND, Calif. (AP) — A San Francisco Bay Area city official wants to explore the possibility of using a cruise ship to house up to 1,000 homeless people amid a high cost of living and a shortage of housing. Oakland City Council President Rebecca Kaplan told a council meeting Tuesday that the ship would be brought to the Port of Oakland, but port officials said Wednesday the move would be “untenable.”

“We respect President Kaplan’s desire to address homelessness but Port of Oakland docks are designed to work cargo ships, there isn’t the infrastructure to berth a cruise ship,” port spokesman Mike Zampa said.

The port is among the 10 busiest in the nation and safety and security issues in the federally regulated

facilities “would make residential uses untenable,” Zampa said.

Kaplan didn’t immediately return a request for further comment from The Associated Press.

Kaplan said she has been contacted by cruise ship companies about providing a ship for emergency housing, and that the companies were reaching out to the Port of Oakland about what options exist to park a ship at the port, the San Francisco Chronicle reported. She didn’t provide further details on those companies.

Kaplan said she plans to present a proposal to the council in January that will be “no or low” cost to the city because residents of the cruise ship would pay for rooms based on their income. The city would not buy the cruise ship.



In this May 17, 2019, file photo, a tugboat assists as a container ship is prepared for docking at the Port of Oakland in Oakland, Calif.

Associated Press

Homelessness has spiked in Oakland in the past two years with the number of unsheltered people increasing from 1,900 to more than 3,000 people.

“It could be a great way to house a lot of people quickly,” Kaplan told The Chronicle. “Cruise ships have been used for emergency housing after natural disasters and for extra housing for things like Olympics.”

Kaplan compared her vision for an Oakland cruise ship to something like the Queen Mary in Long Beach in Southern California. The 1936 ocean liner is now a floating hotel with 347 rooms. A room with two twin beds rents for \$141 a night and \$146 a night for a full-size bed.

“It could be like that,” Kaplan said. “But as affordable housing instead of hotel.” □

Civil rights group sues over Oklahoma bail practices

By SEAN MURPHY
Associated Press

OKLAHOMA CITY (AP) — A civil rights group has filed a federal class-action lawsuit against court officials in central Oklahoma, alleging a county’s bail system unconstitutionally discriminates against poor and disabled people.

The American Civil Liberties Union of Oklahoma filed the suit late Tuesday in federal court in Oklahoma City on behalf of six inmates currently being held in the Canadian County jail.

The lawsuit alleges that the county’s bail system routinely keeps poor people in jail before a trial, not because they are a flight risk or a danger to society but only because they can’t afford to pay bail. The suit also alleges that inmates aren’t provided access to

counsel when bail is set, that hearings are taking place in private, and that the system unconstitutionally discriminates against people with disabilities.

One plaintiff, 40-year-old Misty White, who was arrested last month for violating a protective order, began suffering withdrawal symptoms because she wasn’t provided with her medications in the jail, according to the lawsuit.

When she was finally arraigned before a judge more than a week after her arrest, she was not asked whether she could afford an attorney.

“The judge did not ask whether Ms. White has a job or if she could afford to pay \$4,500,” the suit states. “The judge did not provide any explanation for why her bail was set at \$4,500.”



In this Feb. 7, 2017 file photo, Ryan Kiesel, right, Executive Director of the American Civil Liberties Union of Oklahoma, speaks during a news conference in Oklahoma City. At left is Brady Henderson, Legal Director.

Associated Press

The county also has a practice of denying court-appointed attorneys to any inmate who does manage to pay bail, according to the suit.

The suit focuses on Canadian County, but such unconstitutional practices are taking place in counties across the state, said Ryan Kiesel, executive director of ACLU of Oklahoma.

“We are here this morning to put every judicial district on notice that the continued use of unconstitutional bail practices will not be

tolerated,” Kiesel said.

The lawsuit seeks an end to the county’s bail-setting policies and asks the court to require hearings be held promptly after arrest. Those hearings should include, among other things, an individualized inquiry into a person’s ability to pay bail and the presence of an attorney for those who can’t afford it.

A telephone message left Thursday with presiding Canadian County District Judge Paul Hesse was not immediately returned. □

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Company to pay \$245M toward cleanup of Kalamazoo River PCBs

By **JOHN FLESHER**
AP Environmental Writer
TRAVERSE CITY, Mich. (AP)

— One of the companies responsible for polluting an 80-mile (129-kilometer) stretch of river and floodplains in southwestern Michigan with toxic chemicals will pay at least \$245.2 million to advance a cleanup effort that began more than 20 years ago, federal officials said Wednesday. NCR Corp. will fund the dredging of contaminated sediments and removal of an aging dam in the Kalamazoo River under an agreement with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, the U.S. Department of Justice and the state of Michigan, officials told The Associated Press ahead of an official announcement.

"This is a big step forward toward cleaning up the river," said John Irving, a deputy assistant administrator in the EPA's Office of Enforcement and Compliance Assurance.

The Kalamazoo is polluted with polychlorinated biphenyls, or PCBs, from paper recycling mills. Used for ink removal, the chemicals were discharged into the river from the 1950s through the mid-1970s. They also seeped into groundwater and surface waters from



In this Thursday, Dec. 5, 2019 photo provided by the Environmental Protection Agency shows an aerial view of the dam stabilization project at the Trowbridge Dam on the Kalamazoo River near Allegan, Mich., in southwestern Michigan.

landfills where mill waste was dumped.

In addition to the river, the contamination zone in Allegan and Kalamazoo counties includes a roughly 3-mile (5-kilometer) section of a tributary called Portage Creek, as well as mill properties, riverbanks and floodplains. It is on the federal Superfund list of hazardous sites.

Signs posted along the river warn anglers not to eat the

fish they catch.

The EPA has overseen the removal of nearly 450,000 cubic yards (344,000 cubic meters) of soil and sediment from the area since 1998, in addition to cleaning up 7 miles (11 kilometers) of the river and riverbanks. Eighty-two acres (33 hectares) of landfills containing PCBs have been covered with layers of clay, topsoil and vegetation to prevent the toxins from leaching into

groundwater.

But much remains to be done. The agreement between NCR and the government calls for the company to pay at least \$135.7 million for cleanup work that is expected to take an additional 10-15 years.

Among the tasks: dismantling Trowbridge Dam in Allegan County.

The dam, which was built in 1898 to supply electric power to Kalamazoo, is in

poor shape and has been over-topped by high water. It is the highest-priority dam removal planned in Michigan, according to the state Department of Natural Resources, which set aside \$2.9 million in May to get the project underway. The first step is to stabilize the structure so that it won't collapse while a contractor dredges PCB-laced sediments from a 2.4-mile (3.9-kilometer) river section upstream, which is expected to take three years, said Paul Ruesch, the EPA's on-site coordinator.

NCR funds will pay for that work and for razing the dam when the sediment removal is complete, Assistant U.S. Attorney General Jeffrey Bossert Clark told the AP.

"You want to get that sediment out before taking the dam out, so you're not letting the sediments wash further downstream," he said. The removal of tainted soils in several floodplain spots is also funded under the deal. And the company will also pay \$76.5 million to the EPA to cover past and future costs of the river cleanup; \$27 million to other federal and state agencies for damages to natural resources; and \$6 million to the state for past and future costs. □

Associated Press

ICE arrested fewer in 2019 as resources shifted to border

By **JAKE BLEIBERG**
Associated Press

DALLAS (AP) — U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement arrested fewer people during the 2019 budget year than last year, in part because resources were shifted to help handle the massive surge of migrants at the U.S.-Mexico border, the agency said Wednesday.

And the average number of immigrants in detention was 50,165 — even though Congress limits funding to cover just 45,000.

"There is no doubt that the border crisis, coupled with the unwillingness of some local jurisdictions that choose to put politics over public safety has made it more difficult for ICE to carry out its congressionally mandated interior enforcement mission," acting director Matt Albence said.

Enforcement and removal officers

with ICE — a Homeland Security agency — arrest and detain immigrants who are deemed to be in the U.S. illegally. Over the budget year that ended Sept. 30, officers arrested about 143,000 people, about 13,000 less than last year, and deported more than 267,000. Most of those arrested were people with criminal records for crimes such as homicide, kidnapping, sexual assault and assault, ICE said.

In announcing the annual enforcement numbers, Albence said his officers were diverted to help with the border crisis, which affected overall arrests. He held a news conference in Dallas, a jurisdiction where the largest number of arrests occurred — 16,900 — and there's a high level of cooperation with local law enforcement. Local law enforcement do not help ICE in so-called sanctuary cities such as

New York and Chicago.

There was a drastic increase in the number of families crossing the border last year — at least 473,000 for the budget year, nearly three times the previous full-year record for families. Most were coming from Central America.

While the numbers surged, Homeland Security agents and officers were overwhelmed because families with small children require much more care. There were nearly 1 million crossings from the early 2000s, but those were mostly single men from Mexico who were easily returned.

Border officers pleaded for help but it wasn't until the summer, when reports of squalid conditions and surging numbers of detainees and children dying were published, that Congress authorized \$4 billion in emergency funding. That

funding expired at the end of the fiscal year.

Many of those families were released into the U.S. while their asylum requests wind through the courts — a practice President Donald Trump has derided as "catch-and-release." Homeland Security officials have said they would detain families, but ICE has not been funded for that. The emergency funds from Congress did not include additional bed space for immigration detention. At one point, ICE was detaining some 56,000 people.

Border crossings are declining amid crackdowns by Mexico at its border plus U.S. policies that have sent more than 50,000 asylum seekers back to Mexico to wait out their claims, and have made anyone who crossed through a third country inadmissible for asylum. □

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New Jersey mayor says attackers targeted Jewish market

By DAVID PORTER and JIM MUSTIAN

Associated Press

JERSEY CITY, N.J. (AP) —

The man and woman who stormed a Jewish market in a deadly shooting in Jersey City clearly targeted the place, the mayor said Wednesday, amid growing fears the bloodshed was an anti-Semitic attack.

New Jersey Attorney General Gurbil Grewal, though, cautioned that the motive for the attack that left six people dead Tuesday was still under investigation. The two assailants were killed along with three people inside the kosher market and a police officer in an hourslong gunbattle and standoff that began at a cemetery.

"As we speak, we are working to learn more about the shooters' motivations and whether others may be involved," Grewal said.

The killers were identified as David N. Anderson, 47, and Francine Graham, 50 both of them also suspects in the slaying of an Uber driver found dead in the trunk of a car in nearby Bayonne over the weekend, Grewal said.

Authorities are investigating potential connections between the attackers and the Black Hebrew Israelite movement, some of whose members are known to rail against whites and Jews, a law enforcement official familiar with the case said. Investigators also are scouring social media postings of at least one of the gunmen in search of a motive, said the official, who spoke on condition of anonymity because the investigation is still going on.

The Southern Poverty Law Center has labeled the Hebrew Israelites a black supremacist group.

The shooting in the city of 270,000 people across the Hudson River from New York City began at a graveyard, where Detective Joseph Seals, a 40-year-old member of a unit devoted to taking illegal guns off the street, was gunned down by the assailants, authorities said. The killers then drove a stolen rental van about a mile to the kosher market.

Grewal said that within seconds of pulling up to the market, Anderson got out with a rifle and immediately began shooting, and Graham followed him into the store. He would not say whether Graham had a weapon.

A pipe bomb was found in the attackers' van, FBI agent Gregory Ehrie said.

Mayor Steven Fulop noted that surveillance video of the van showed the assailants driving slowly through the city's streets and then stopping outside the grocery, where they calmly got out of their van and promptly opened fire.

"There were multiple other people on the street, so there were many other targets available to them that they bypassed to attack that place, so it was clear that was their target and they intended to harm people inside," the mayor said of the attackers.

But Fulop cautioned: "I didn't use the word 'anti-Semitic.'"

Anything else is open for investigation."

The drawn-out battle with police filled the streets with



Responders work to clean up the scene of Tuesday's shooting that left multiple people dead at a kosher market on Wednesday Dec. 11, 2019, in Jersey City, N.J.

Associated Press

the sound of high-powered rifle fire and turned the city into what looked like a war zone, with SWAT officers in full tactical gear swarming the neighborhood.

Five bodies were found at the store: the killers and three people who were inside at the time. Police said they were confident the bystanders were shot by the gunmen and not by police.

Two of the victims at the store were identified by members of the Orthodox Jewish community as Mindel Ferencz, 31, who with her husband owned the grocery, and 24-year-old Moshe Deutsch, a rabbinical student from Brooklyn who was shopping there. The Ferencz family had moved to Jersey City from Brooklyn. The third victim was identified by authori-

ties as Miguel Douglas, 49.

A fourth person managed to escape from the store, Grewal said.

Jewish leaders and the Anti-Defamation League, which tracks anti-Semitic attacks, expressed concern about the deaths.

"The report from the Jersey City mayor saying it was a targeted attack makes us incredibly concerned in the Jewish community," said ADL regional director Evan Bernstein.

"They want answers. They demand answers. If this was truly a targeted killing of Jews, then we need to know that right away, and there needs to be the pushing back on this at the highest levels possible."

New York Mayor Bill de Blasio said on MSNBC that the attack was "clearly a hate crime," while New York

Gov. Andrew Cuomo pronounced it a "deliberate attack on the Jewish community."

They announced tighter police protection of synagogues and other Jewish establishments in New York as a precaution.

In the deadliest attack on Jews in U.S. history, 11 people were killed in an October 2018 shooting at a synagogue in Pittsburgh.

Last April, a gunman opened fire at a synagogue north of San Diego, killing a woman and wounding a rabbi and two others.

The kosher grocery is a central fixture in a growing community of Orthodox Jews who have been moving to Jersey City in recent years and settling in what was a mostly black section of Jersey City, causing some resentment. □

Leaders scramble for final votes as UK's ugly election ends

By **JILL LAWLESS**
Associated Press

LONDON (AP) — Britain's election has been like the country's late-autumn weather: chilly and dull, with blustery outbursts.

On the last day of the campaign, political leaders dashed around the U.K. on Wednesday trying to win over millions of undecided voters who will likely determine the outcome.

Opinion polls suggest Prime Minister Boris Johnson's Conservatives have a lead over the main opposition Labour Party led by Jeremy Corbyn ahead of Thursday's election. But all the parties are nervous about the verdict of a volatile electorate fed up after years of Brexit wrangling.

Truck driver Clive Jordan expressed a weariness that could be heard up and down the country during the five-week campaign.

"Basically I just want it over and done with now," he said. "Nobody's doing what they said. Everybody's lying."

Britain's first December vote since 1923 has been dubbed the Brexit Election. It is being held more than two years early in hopes of breaking Britain's political deadlock over the country's stalled departure from the European Union.

Johnson has focused relentlessly on Brexit throughout the campaign, endlessly repeating his slogan "Get Brexit done." He says that if he wins a majority of the 650 House of Commons seats on Thursday, he will get Parliament to ratify his "oven-ready" divorce deal with the EU and take Britain out of the bloc as scheduled on Jan. 31.

"If we can get a working majority, we have a deal, it's ready to go," Johnson said Wednesday as he watched pies being baked at a catering firm in central England. "We put it in, slam it in the oven, take it out and there it is -- get Brexit done."

As a slogan, "Get Brexit done" is both misleading and effective. If Britain leaves the EU on Jan. 31 it will only kick-start months

or years of negotiations on future trade relations with the bloc, involving tough trade-offs between inde-

pendence and access. "His campaign was all about 'Getting Brexit done,' but actually it's about getting Brexit started," said Tony Travers, professor of government at the London School of Economics. "Elections seem to suggest these things are easy; they're not."



Britain's Prime Minister and Conservative party leader Boris Johnson poses as he hammers a "Get Brexit Done" sign into the garden of a supporter, in Benfleet, east of London on Wednesday, Dec. 11, 2019, the final day of campaigning for the general election.

But the notion of an end to the Brexit melodrama is tempting to voters who have watched politicians bicker for more than three years since Britain's June 2016 vote to leave the European Union.

"Brexit is fueling the election," said Allan Bailey, a parish councilor in Clowne, a former coal-mining village in the central England constituency of Bolsover. "If one person can offer this area ... Brexit, that person will win."

The Conservatives have focused much of their energy on trying to win seats like Bolsover — working-

ed strongly in 2016 to leave the EU.

Polls suggest that plan may be working, and the Conservatives have also been helped by the Brexit Party led by Nigel Farage, which decided at the last minute not to contest 317 Conservative-held seats to avoid splitting the pro-Brexit vote. Labour — which is largely but ambiguously pro-EU — faces competition for anti-Brexit voters from the centrist Liberal Democrats, Scottish and Welsh nationalist parties and the Greens. "The only reason the Conservatives are so far ahead in the polls now is that the 'remain' vote is divided," said Rosie Campbell, professor of politics at King's College London. "For 'remain' voters it has been a real failure of leadership."

If the Tories fail to win a majority, it will be a sign that voters think other issues are just as important as Brexit. Labour has focused on do-

mestic issues, especially the wear and tear to the country's state-funded health service after nine years of

fronted with past broken promises, untruths and offensive statements, from calling the children of single mothers "ignorant, aggressive and illegitimate" to comparing Muslim women who wear face-covering veils to "letter boxes."

Corbyn has been accused of allowing anti-Semitism to spread within the party. The 70-year-old left-winger is portrayed by opponents as an aging Marxist with unsavory past associations with Hamas and the IRA.

Though the candidates claim to carry positive messages, the campaign has been littered with allegations of mudslinging and dishonesty — largely by the Conservatives. The Tories doctored a video of an interview with a senior Labour lawmaker to make it appear as if he had failed to answer a question, when he had. The party re-branded its press office Twitter account "FactCheckUK" during a television debate, earning a warning but no sanction from the social media site.

Johnson combined an aggressive online campaign with a cautious approach to live appearances. He largely avoided tough interviews — to the fury of opponents — and had a generally gaffe-free election until the final days of the campaign.

On Monday, Johnson was caught making a hamfisted and seemingly unsympathetic reaction to a picture of a 4-year-old boy lying on a hospital floor because no beds were available. Asked to look at the picture on a reporter's phone, Johnson grabbed the device and pocketed it. On Tuesday, the father of a man killed in last month's knife attack near London Bridge accused the prime minister of using his son's death for political gain.

It's unclear how much those moments will influence the outcome when Britain's voters pass their verdict on Thursday. Polls are open from 7 a.m. to 10 p.m. (0700GMT to 2200GMT), with most results expected early Friday. □

Associated Press

Conservative government austerity. Labour also promises to boost public spending, nationalize Britain's railways and utilities and provide everyone in the country with free internet access — all paid for by raising taxes on high earners.

"My message to all those voters who are still undecided is that you can vote for hope in this election," Corbyn planned to say Wednesday at his final campaign rally.

On Brexit, Labour says it will negotiate a new divorce deal with the EU, then offer voters the choice in a new referendum between leaving on those terms and remaining in the bloc.

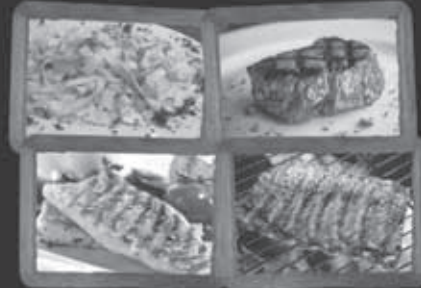
For many voters, Thursday's election offers an unpalatable choice. Both Johnson and Corbyn have personal approval ratings in negative territory, and both have been dogged by questions about their character.

Johnson has been con-

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Diplomats to Lebanon: Expect no aid before government formed

By CLAIRE PARKER

Associated Press
PARIS (AP) — Lebanon cannot expect to receive international aid to its battered economy until a new government undertakes serious reforms, diplomats decided at a closed-door meeting in Paris on Wednesday. The international group, led by France and the United Nations, met to discuss conditions for helping ease turmoil in Lebanon, which is facing its worst financial crisis in decades and political uncertainty amid an ongoing protest movement. Lebanese businesses and households are growing increasingly desperate as cash supplies there have dwindled.

Representatives from several countries, including the United States, and international financial institutions agreed on a set of principles Lebanon must meet before it can expect to receive foreign cash.



Lebanese protesters gather outside of the French foreign ministry in Paris, Wednesday, Dec. 11, 2019, to denounce a closed-door meeting of diplomats from several countries on aid to Lebanon. Associated Press

U.S. Assistant Secretary for Near Eastern Affairs David Schenker said attendees agreed to give technical advice to Lebanese institu-

tions but they won't provide the bailout that caretaker Prime Minister Saad Hariri had requested. Hariri had called on Saudi Arabia,

France, Turkey, the United States, China, and Egypt to send funds to help Lebanon finance imports. "There's no aid package, there is no

bailout," Schenker told The Associated Press. "Lebanon is not being saved from its financial mess." Schenker said the group is considering sending some humanitarian aid to Lebanon to alleviate residents' suffering, though it was unclear when or how much. French Foreign Minister Jean-Yves Le Drian said in closing remarks the group supports protesters who have taken to the streets since Oct. 17 to call for an end to corruption and the overhaul of the Lebanese political system. "The Lebanese have mobilized for many weeks to demand reforms. They must be heard," he said. Hariri stayed on as caretaker prime minister after politicians proved unable to form a new government. Protesters want to see a non-sectarian, technocratic government — and they want all traces of the old regime, including Hariri, out of office. □

Denmark: Police foil suspected Islamist terror attack plans

Associated Press

COPENHAGEN, Denmark (AP) — Danish police have arrested "some 20 people" suspected of involvement in Islamist terrorism in a series of raids across the country, authorities said Wednesday. Flemming Drejer, the operative head of the Denmark's Security and Intelligence Service, said the suspects were "driven by a militant, Islamist motive." Copenhagen Police Chief Inspector



Police conduct searches at Ramsingvej in Copenhagen, Wednesday, Dec. 11, 2019.

Associated Press

Joergen Bergen Skov said some of them would be charged under the Scandinavian country's terror laws on Thursday behind closed doors.

"Some had have procured things to make explosives and have tried to acquire weapons," Bergen Skov told a joint press conference with the domestic intelligence service.

Bergen Skov said police raided about 20 addresses in Denmark and six police departments across the

country were involved. The raids and arrests were coordinated by the Copenhagen police.

No details were given as to what the target was or when an attack would take place.

Danish authorities have reported foiling several extremist attacks in recent years, including ones linked to the 2005 publication in a newspaper of 12 cartoons by various artists depicting the Prophet Muhammad. □

Algeria election may bring new era or continued protests

By **AOMAR OUALI**
ELAINE GANLEY

Associated Press

ALGIERS, Algeria (AP) — Algeria's powerful army chief promises that a presidential election on Thursday will define the contours of a new era for a nation where the highest office has stood vacant for eight months. The tenacious pro-democracy movement which forced leader Abdelaziz Bouteflika to resign after 20 years in power doesn't believe the claim and is boycotting the vote. At stake in the election is whether Africa's largest country, rich with oil and gas and a strategic partner of the West in countering terrorism, will get a fresh start with its next head of state, remain paralyzed by protests or suffer worse under a president lacking popular legitimacy. The situation is remarkable in a country where the previous presidents were generals or, like Bouteflika, have had the blessing of the army brass since Algeria gained independence from France in 1962 after a brutal seven-year war.



In this Dec. 6, 2019 file photo, people demonstrate with anti-election posters in Algiers.

Associated Press

Weekly anti-government protest marches that started in February eventually forced Bouteflika from power, and activists have continued pressing their demands with peaceful demonstrations marked by scores of arrests. In a nod to the public dissent, the interim government that took over

launched an anti-corruption drive that secured convictions of some of the country's most powerful figures, including Bouteflika's brother. Said Bouteflika ran the former president's inner circle, dispensing political and financial largesse to the favored. He was sentenced in September to 15 years in prison for "plotting

against the state." The five presidential candidates, among them two other former prime ministers, are all linked to the system the pro-democracy protesters want to bury. The candidates have been at pains to draw crowds of supporters during the 22-day campaign period. Instead, they have

been pummeled with insults during their public appearances, cancelled rallies and avoided regions known for their hostility to the political elite.

Army Chief of Staff Ahmed Gaid Salah has emerged as the leading authority figure inside the power vacuum created by Bouteflika's ouster. He orchestrated the election, including its date. Taking its cue from Gaid Salah, the interim government has also promised a new era for the North African nation. To show the military was in step with the democratic times, soldiers were told to vote like other civilians, at polling stations and in civilian clothes.

"The presidential elections will trace the contours of the new Algerian state," Gaid Salah said in a speech this week, while warning that anyone trying to trouble the voting would face "the force of the law." Police intervened with tear gas and water cannon to hold back protesters as former Prime Minister Ali Benflis held a campaign rally in Bouira, east of the capital. □

Egypt urges decisive action against states backing 'terror'



In this Sept. 24, 2019 file photo, Egypt's President Abdel Fattah el-Sisi addresses the 74th session of the United Nations General Assembly.

Associated Press

BY **SAMY MAGDY**
Associated Press

CAIRO (AP) — Egypt's president Wednesday called for "decisive" and "collective" action against countries supporting "terrorism" in an apparent reference to

Turkey and Qatar, who back the Muslim Brotherhood group, which is outlawed in Egypt. The three countries also support opposing factions in the war-torn Libya. Addressing a two-day forum on peace in Africa in

the southern city of Aswan, Abdel-Fattah el-Sisi also said achieving sustainable development in Africa is needed, along with efforts to fight militant groups in Egypt and sub-Saharan countries.

"There should be a decisive response to countries supporting terrorism and a collective response against terrorism, because the terrorist groups will only have the ability to fight if they are provided with financial, military and moral support," he said.

Egypt has for years been battling an Islamic State-led insurgency that intensified after the military overthrew an elected but divisive Muslim Brotherhood President Muhammad Morsi in 2013 amid mass protests against his brief rule.

Militant-related violence in

Egypt has been centered on the Sinai Peninsula, as well as in the country's vast Western Desert, which has witnessed deadly attacks blamed on militants infiltrating from neighboring Libya.

Since Morsi's ouster, tensions have grown between Egypt and Turkey and Egypt and Qatar. The political party of Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan is an offshoot of the Muslim Brotherhood, which Cairo designated as a terrorist group in 2013.

El-Sisi also said a "comprehensive, political solution would be achieved in the coming months" for the conflict in Libya, which descended into chaos after the 2011 civil war that ousted and killed long-time dictator Moammar Gadhafi. He did not elaborate. El-Sisi apparently was re-

ferring to an international summit in Berlin that aims to reach agreement on an outline of actions needed to end the conflict. The conference had been scheduled for October but it has apparently been postponed.

After the 2011 civil war that ousted and killed long-time dictator Moammar Gadhafi, Libya descended into chaos and split in two, with a weak U.N.-supported administration in Tripoli overseeing the country's west and a rival government in the east aligned with the Libyan National Army led by Gen. Khalifa Hifter.

Hifter is backed by the United Arab Emirates and Egypt, as well as France and Russia, while the Tripoli-based government receives aid from Turkey, Qatar and Italy. □



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Chinese officials lash out at US over new legislation

Associated Press

BEIJING (AP) — Chinese officials lashed out at the U.S. on Wednesday over recent legislation passed by Congress criticizing Beijing for its policies in Hong Kong and the Xinjiang region in western China, as well as ongoing trade disputes.

They marked the latest salvos in an ongoing campaign of vilification over what Beijing considers hostile acts aimed at restraining its development as a world power.

Chinese Vice Foreign Minister Ma Zhaoxu did not mention the U.S. by name, but it was clear what nation he was referring to Wednesday when he said a "certain individual country vigorously starts trade wars and constantly introduces so-called human rights and democracy bills to openly interfere in the internal affairs of other countries."

Chinese diplomats have derided the legislation as "stupid" and "malicious" and sought to rally friendly



Chinese minister of propaganda Huang Kunming speaks during a forum on human rights in Beijing on Wednesday, Dec. 11, 2019.

Associated Press

foreign governments, politicians and academics to condemn it. Ma also accused the U.S. of spreading conflicts and humanitarian crises elsewhere "under the banner of human rights," reflecting complaints that

American interventions and the promotion of democracy have destabilized countries from Syria to Venezuela.

China has accused the U.S. of fomenting mass anti-Beijing demonstrations

in Hong Kong that are in their seventh month, refusing to recognize protesters' demands for expanded democracy through direct elections for the semi-autonomous Chinese territory's leader and members

of its legislature.

The U.S. legislation condemns the mass detentions of an estimated more than 1 million Uighurs, Kazakhs and others. It also raises possible sanctions against Chinese government officials deemed responsible for human rights abuses in Xinjiang. China claims that the vast system of detention camps is merely part of a program to provide job skills and fight poverty and religious radicalization. Ma also attacked U.S. trade policy, saying — again without mentioning Washington by name — that the country referred to "wielded sanctions batons," and engaged in economic blockades, the decoupling of science and technology and financial sanctions against target nations, the main one presumably being China.

"These acts not only hinder the development of the world economy, but also violate the human rights of the people of the affected countries. □

India's Parliament passes contentious citizenship bill

By ASHOK SHARMA

Associated Press

NEW DELHI (AP) — Indian lawmakers approved legislation on Wednesday granting citizenship to non-Muslims who migrated illegally from Pakistan, Bangladesh and Afghanistan despite ongoing protests against the measure in the country's remote northeast.

The upper house of Parliament passed the bill 125-105 on Wednesday night. The lower house had approved it on Monday.

It now needs to be signed by the country's ceremonial president, a formality before becoming law.

The Citizenship Amendment Bill was introduced by the Hindu nationalist-led government of Prime Minister Narendra Modi following his resounding election victory in May. Protesters say they oppose the legislation out of concern that migrants who came to the country illegally will move to the border region in the northeast and dilute the culture and political sway of indigenous tribal people.

The law gives Indian citizenship to Hindus, Sikhs, Buddhists, Jains, Parsi and Christians who migrated to India from the three Muslim-majority neighboring



Protesters shout slogans against the Citizenship Amendment Bill (CAB) in Gauhati, India, Wednesday, Dec. 11, 2019.

Associated Press

countries before Dec. 31, 2014.

The total number is expect-

ed to run into the millions. Anand Sharma, a leader of the main opposition Con-

gress party, said the legislation is discriminatory because it excludes Muslims despite constitutional guarantees of equal opportunities for all groups. The opposition accuses Modi's Hindu-nationalist governing party of being anti-Muslim.

Protesters burned tires and blocked highways and rail lines for a second day Wednesday.

Police fired rubber bullets and used batons and tear gas to disperse protesters in Dibrugarh district in Assam state, the Press Trust of India news agency said. □

Ex-Mexico security chief long haunted by corruption claims

By **MARK STEVENSON**
MARIA VERZA

Associated Press

Mexico City (AP) — Mexico's former security chief was dogged by so many allegations of corruption and wrongdoing for so long that some said it was only a matter of time before he would be arrested. What amazed some was that it took so long, and that Genaro García Luna's arrest this week came on U.S. soil rather than in Mexico.

García Luna, 51, who left the security post nearly a decade ago, was charged in federal court in New York with three counts of trafficking cocaine and one count of making false statements. He was arrested Monday outside Dallas and at his initial appearance Tuesday his bail hearing was set for Dec. 17. He moved to the U.S. in 2012 and has been living in Florida.

"This wasn't a surprise," said Samuel González, who served as Mexico's chief organized crime prosecutor in a prior administration. González said he turned down offers to work with García Luna in the 2000s, noting that "it wasn't a question of if, but rather when" García Luna would be charged.

García Luna was public safety secretary in President Felipe Calderon's Cabinet from 2006 to 2012, playing a key role in setting the government's security strategy during some of the worst and most embarrassing moments of bloody drug war that resulted in the deaths of over 100,000 people and tens of thousands more missing.

Calderon tweeted Tuesday night that he knew nothing about the accusations against his former security chief. He said his security policy was not made by any one official and was marked by a high level of cooperation with the U.S. He said if the allegations were proven true, it would represent a serious violation of the trust placed in García Luna.



In this June 2, 2011 file photo, Mexico's Genaro García Luna speaks during a ceremony to designate June 2 as the Federal Police Day in Mexico City.

Associated Press

On Wednesday morning, President Andrés Manuel López Obrador, who has made eradicating corruption a pillar of his administration, said his government would assist the U.S. with its case in any way possible. He said banks had already been asked to provide financial information for the Attorney General's Office.

"It reaffirms that the country's principle problem was corruption," Lopez Obrador said. "Imagine the authorities responsible for security bribed. Now what guarantee is there for citizens if there is no boundary between authorities and criminals? If authorities are working for criminals there is no possibility of guaranteeing peace and tranquility." As security chief, García Luna was widely feared and in charge of Mexico's federal police and the rest of the civilian security apparatus, giving him unrivaled access to intelligence about law enforcement operations and investigations that U.S. prosecutors say he shared with the Sinaloa cartel. Calderon's administration was criticized at the time by many who argued it was not as aggressive against the Sinaloa cartel as it was against the gang's rivals.

Before joining Calderon's government, García Luna led Mexico's equivalent of the FBI, the Federal Investigative Agency, under President Vicente Fox.

For José Reveles, a journalist and author of several books on organized crime, García Luna was "the omnipotent cop of Vicente Fox and later Felipe Calderon." He was an official few dared to clash with, Reveles added, and the questions that have arisen about him are numerous. Reveles said that in 2005, during the Fox administration, agents from the Federal Investigative Agency "were capturing Zetas (members of a rival cartel) and turning them over to the Sinaloa cartel." Anti-drug prosecutor Santiago Vasconcelos made that accusation public, but later died in a plane crash.

In December of that year, García Luna's agents detained French citizen Florence Cassez and held her illegally until they could stage a media event. She was paraded before TV cameras and forced to participate in a staged, televised reenactment of her capture. She was held for seven years on kidnapping charges, but was released and became a cause celebre in her

hometown.

In 2008, banners began appearing across the country claiming García Luna was working for the Sinaloa cartel.

Reveles, who was then covering the Congress and had access to documents, said that in 2008 Mexican lawmakers took closed-door testimony from federal agents that García Luna's convoy had been intercepted in the state of Morelos by members of the Beltran Leyva cartel, which had broken from the Sinaloa cartel. The agents reported that García Luna was taken to meet with Arturo Beltran Lleyva, one of the cartel's leaders, Reveles said. García Luna denied all of it.

A 2011 Televisa telenovela called "The Team" that portrayed federal police as crime-fighting heroes was allegedly the brainchild of García Luna and financed with government money. The honest, well-trained and brave officers portrayed on the show were at odds with the public's longstanding perception of Mexico's police.

In 2012, arrested U.S. drug gang leader Édgar Valdez Villarreal, alias "La Barbie," claimed in an open letter that he had paid off García Luna.

Also in 2012, rifle drug corruption in the federal police force burst into the open when one federal officer opened fire on his colleagues at Mexico City's international airport.

And finally, in 2012, 14 Mexican agents under García Luna's command opened fire on an SUV carrying two U.S. CIA agents near Mexico City after Mexican officials claimed their agents mistook the Americans' vehicle for one driven by gang members.

Despite all that, Mexico security analyst Alejandro Hope noted, the U.S. government apparently vetted García Luna, praised the drug busts he carried out and allowed him to live in the United States for about seven years before charging him.

"Why now?" Hope asked. While the accusations have long been out there, it was unclear whether the timing of the charges could be explained by some unknown deal within the complex U.S.-Mexico relationship on drug trafficking or if it stemmed from testimony in the U.S. trial of notorious drug boss Joaquin "El Chapo" Guzmán.

Guzmán was tried in New York in 2018. At his trial, former cartel member Jesus Zambada testified that he personally made at least \$6 million in hidden payments to García Luna on behalf of his older brother, cartel boss Ismael "El Mayo" Zambada, in 2005-2007.

"I believe he enriched himself, but I don't know if it was from that (drug cartel bribes)," Hope said.

If so, it was extreme arrogance or stupidity, Hope said. He said there are a lot of ways a Cabinet secretary with budget authority and influence could enrich himself, but just one way that would be guaranteed to draw the ire of the U.S. government.

U.S. authorities said Tuesday that García Luna had amassed a fortune of millions, well beyond what a public servant could expect to earn. □

LOCAL



LG Smith's Steak & Chop House introduces fabulous Sunday Brunch

ORANJESTAD — Every Sunday of this month will be a delight at LG Smith's Steak & Chop House (LGS) where they will be offering a Sunday Brunch a-la-carte with unlimited mimosa and prosecco included. Without any doubt LGS Sunday Brunch à la carte is exceptional. Gather the whole family and experience the best brunch à la carte on Aruba. The brunch will also be available on Christmas day, December 25. Enjoy this elegant menu with options such as the Lobster Mc & Cheese, Steak & Eggs, Shrimp Risotto and much more.

LG Smith's Steak & Chop House is known for the great quality of its dishes and its kitchen staff that surely knows how to perfectly present a unique culinary experience. For appetizer choose between Short Rib Hash, Lobster Mac & Cheese, Mixed Seafood Ceviche, Benedict L.G, Seared Scallop and much more. Main dishes such as the African Shakshuka Eggs, which are eggs served in tomatoe broth with shimps and garlic bread, will definitely ample your culinary horizon. The popular Steak & Eggs is also in the menu, Shrimp Rissoto, Seared Ahí Tuna, (a spicy tuna dish served with yams puree, bokchoy and Miso sauce). For the salmon lovers they have the Pa 'Lemon Dill Salmon' grilled with potatoes, spinache and a 'lemon dill cream sauce'. Do not leave without trying a dessert. Enjoy a Sinful Chocolate Cake, Panna Cotta, a chocolate icecream or a delicious Nutella French Toast!

Come with the whole family and enjoy a Sunday Brunch a-la-carte during the entire month of December or make your Christmas day reservation. Brunch is served from 11 am to 2:30pm. For reservations call +297 523-6115 or visit LG Smith's Steak & Chop House on Facebook. ☐



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Post Aruba emitted a new set of “archaeological stamps 2019”

ORANJESTAD —Post Aruba N.V. emitted a new set of “Archaeological Stamps 2019”.

The set consists of four stamps namely 100c, 130c, 220c and 320c, for a total amount of Afl. 7, 70. The first-day-envelope costs Afl. 9, 45. The stamps are designed by Alfonso the Windt. They are printed by the Johan Enschedé Security Print.

100 cents: Tools

This stamp represents an Ancient Hammer and Grain Grinder. Imagine all the tasks you do in one day and the many different tools needed to complete them. Amerindians spent a lot of time making, recycling and repairing tools from the materials readily available to them such as stone, shell, coral, wood and bone.

130 cents: Excavating Ceramic Objects; Eating and Drinking

This stamp represents bowls, utensils and cups, everything you need to eat, drink and share food. Although the materials are different, ancient dishware served the same purpose as it does today. The kitchen was and is a busy place. Amerindians worked together to prepare and cook food in communal areas outside the home. Archaeologists have discovered many artefacts used for processing and storing food.

220 cents: Beauty and Currency

From the smallest pendant to the most finely decorated ceramic, the skill and creativity of Amerindians is unmistakable; drilling, polishing, painting, grinding model-



ing. These were just a few of the techniques used by artisans. This skill is most prominently displayed in exquisitely crafted stone and shell beads. The workmanship is so precise, that attempts to replicate it have failed. Finely crafted pottery was delicately painted, molded, incised and punctured. Bead necklaces were not only forms of decoration and personal status, but also used as currency in trading relations. The value was determined by the craftsmanship, the length of the necklace and the size of the beads.

In Aruba, both shell and stone necklaces have been discovered,

although shell was much more common. Among the Caiquetio, the smallest, most finely crafted beads would have held the highest value. The skill required to shape and drill these tiny pieces was very much appreciated. Many of these objects were discovered in graves, illustrating their importance. Huge deposits of shells called “shell middens” have been discovered in Aruba. A “shell midden” is a heap that is primarily made up of shells and marine remains that have been discarded after the edible part of the animal was removed. Most “middens” are located near the shore except for one pre-ceramic deposit located inland at

Malmok near a burial site. Archaeologists study “shell middens” to discover what kind of food ancient people ate. These deposits show that Amerindians ate conch, turtle, clams, fish and snails.

320 cents: Burial Practices

Amerindian burial practices were deliberate and often elaborate, incorporating rich grave goods that identified the person's status in the community. During the Ceramic Period, the house functioned as both living space and burial ground. Many graves were discovered under the dirt floors of houses and village plazas. People living in the Ceramic period often buried their dead in jars or urns. This type of burial is referred to as an “urn burial”, which can be divided in primary and secondary. In a primary urn burial, the individual is buried right after death and all bones are present. In a secondary urn burial, all or some of the bones from a body buried in a pit or left to desiccate in the open air, are collected after some time and reburied in an urn.

These stamps are available at all the Post Office locations in Oranjestad, San Nicolas and Sta. Cruz. Make sure that you have this set in your collection as the stock is limited. For more information on the “Archaeological Stamps 2019” issue, please contact the Philatelic Department at +297 528-7678 / main office located at J.E. Irausquinplein # 9, Oranjestad or visit their Facebook page: Aruba Stamps and Webpage: postaruba.com. □



Canada and USA honorees

EAGLE BEACH — Recently, Marouska Heyliger honored Tammy and Bob Berry from Ontario with their Distinguished visitors certificate and Pamela and Richard Rupp from Iowa with their Goodwill Ambassadors certificate in the name of the Aruba Tourism Authority.

The event which commemorates the Berry's 10th and the Rupp's 26th consecutive visit to the island was held at Divi Village Resort. Both honorees love coming to the island for its friendly people, safety of the island and beautiful weather. □

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Neighbors: Trustworthy Doctor & Great Equipped Pharmacy

- Both in walking distance from resorts -



PALM BEACH — Doctor Lili Beke from the Walk-In Clinic has a solid reputation, built up in more than 35 years of experience as a medical doctor. Both tourists and locals feel great with her for the simple reasons that she has the qualities of a great doctor: communicative, skilled, empathetic and trustworthy. Unique is the fact that you can walk into this clinic without an appointment and that the Palm Beach Service Pharmacy she partners up with is literally next door. When you feel sick during vacation you want this out of your system as soon as possible and a convenient solution is forehanded. Don't look any further, help is just around the corner. A one-stop-shopping solution.

Top 5 Vacation Illnesses

The most common reasons why patients walk into her clinic sound very familiar. Doctor Beke: "When on vacation you are excited so you mix meals, eat without control and combine this with more alcohol than usual resulting in an upset stomach. Digestion issues occur and when on a diet you can count on it that you will get sick." Throwing up, diarrhea, dehydration will be a bummer on your vacation. "Second occasion why people step in here is medication. They feel sick because they forgot to take their medicines with them or simply think they don't need it on holiday. But of course the body does not work differently only because you are in another place." This happens especially with patients of higher age and many times with blood pressure medication and psychological medicines, the doctor explains. "As we have the pharmacy next door we can solve this in most cases very quick so you will soon feel better again. Then of course we have the allergies, force majeure but still a hassle. Too much sun bathing is another thing causing dehydration and sun burns."

"I strongly advise to buy a new sunblock cream every vacation. Our pharmacy sells the most advanced ones that is environmental friendly, so not damaging the sea life." As fifth most common reason for patients to come see the doctor she mentions exhaustion. "You want to do everything in a short time and by the end of the day the body is exhausted, giving a reversed reaction. Take it easy please, moderate or like we say here: chill." Besides this top 5 the doctor is visited by patients with chronic diseases that often contact her in advance to travelling.

The Little Ones

With regards to children Dr. Beke advises parents to keep an extra eye on them during vacation. "They are excited, cannot hold control, play all day in the sand and pool and eat a lot of different things. But they are sensitive and you do not want your loved ones waking up in the middle of the night vomiting or with diarrhea." Asthmatic children should be taken care of extra as the sun, water and strong draft on the island can complicate their condition. "Protect the heads of your kids, we are close to the equator and the sun rays are more rectangular thus stronger. The heat and humidity can exhaust the little bodies easily. Let them play under an umbrella preferably and keep drinking water. At the pharmacy you can buy ear plugs to prevent ear infections." The doctor stresses that there is no doubt about drinking tap water. "The water of Aruba is the best. You can drink that without problems. It is excellent. In the States it is prepared with a lot of chemicals, but here it's clean."

Locals

Doctor Beke has a loyal local patient pool staying with her mainly because of the experience and trust. "They tell me I really listen to them, they feel attended and respected. A patient is a human being, not a casus, unfortunately many times doctors are skilled in the medical part but not on the social terrain." The latter is more and more important, especially with certain groups like teenage girls. "They prefer a female doctor to treat typical woman issues. The desire is attention and to feel at ease." Patients step in for second opinions too. "Everybody has the right to do that, it is their body and their money."

Pharmacy Convenience

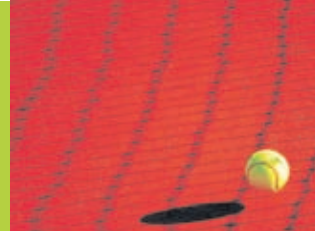
After you pick up your prescription at Dr. Beke's practice, you can go to the Palm Beach Service Pharmacy, right next door. The collaboration between these two results in a quick, efficient and quality service. It's just what you need when you feel the only thing you want is healing. Lennert van der Poel, general manager of the pharmacy, which is part of a group of 5 pharmacies (Botica di Servizio), points out that convenience is not their only unique asset. "We carry a wide variety of medicines from the US, but most of the medicines come from the EU. The prices in the EU are considerably lower than in the U.S." All medicines are European registered with the same standard as U.S. products. "The law in the States allows visitors to get prescribed medicine by a local doctor for up to 6 months, saving them a ton of money.", says van der Poel. Most common medicines requested by visitors are antibiotic, pain killers and anti-allergy medications. However, certain things do not need prescription, such as contact lenses. These don't need a prescription to get them on the island. "We've recently started importing our own 'house brand' of contact lenses called 'Optinova', and the feedback has been amazing", elaborates Van der Poel, "We carry both daily and monthly lenses, which are an ideal substitute if you forget yours when coming on vacation, or even if you would like to take some home, which is why we've seen so many return customers." Naturally we wish you the healthiest, most wonderful vacation of your life on our Happy Island. But In case you are in need of a doctor and a pharmacy, just turn around, walk in and feel welcome to be cured!☑

Palm Beach Service Pharmacy
T: +297 587 1717
www.boticadiservicio.com
info@boticadiservicio.com
Unit 8 at "The Cove"
Palm Beach
Open Mon-Sat
10 am – 4 pm



Aruba Walk-in Clinic
T: +297 588 539
or +297 594 0539(emergency)
lgbeke.md@gmail.com
Unit 9 at "The Cove"
Palm Beach
Open during weekdays
(Friday afternoon 2pm-4.30pm)
9am-12pm, 2.30-5pm
Saturday, Sunday & Holidays
2pm – 4 pm

SPORTS



USA captain Tiger Woods during a press conference ahead of the President's Cup Golf tournament in Melbourne, Australia, Tuesday, Dec. 10, 2019.

Associated Press

Woods and Els meet again, now as captains of Presidents Cup

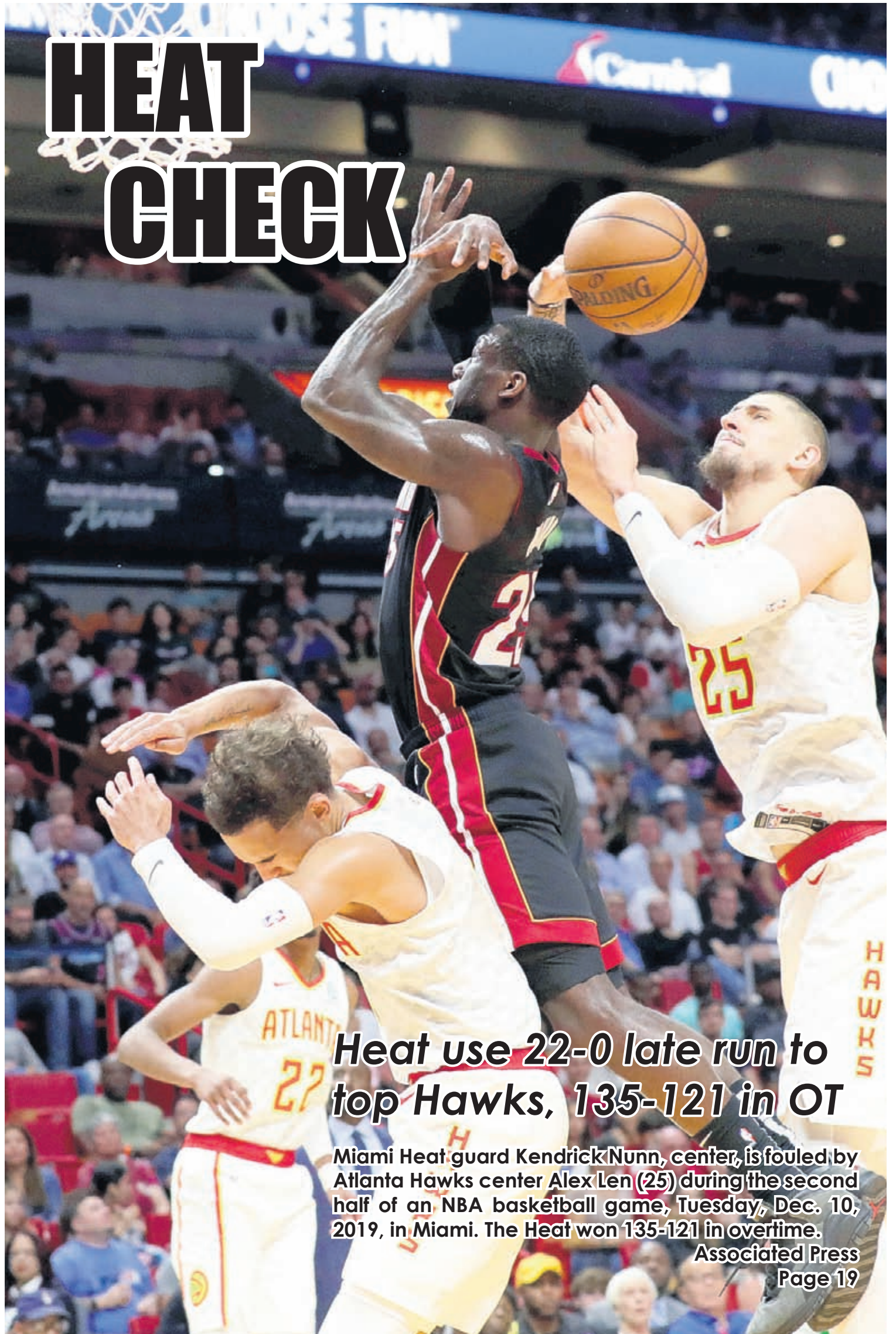
By DOUG FERGUSON
AP Golf Writer

MELBOURNE, Australia (AP) — They first met 25 years ago in Thailand, neither knowing then how much their paths would cross in golf. Ernie Els was a rising star from South Africa, four months away from winning his first U.S. Open. Tiger Woods was a senior in high school, six months away from winning his first U.S. Amateur. Woods recalled "this big, giant of a man" he saw at the 1994 Johnnie Walker Classic.

"I was trying to figure out what the hell am I going to do with maybe playing professional golf down the road," Woods said. "We talked a little bit, and he took a liking to me."

Over the next two decades, no one finished runner-up to Woods more than Els, a rivalry as one-sided as the Presidents Cup.

Continued on Page 18



HEAT CHECK

Heat use 22-0 late run to top Hawks, 135-121 in OT

Miami Heat guard Kendrick Nunn, center, is fouled by Atlanta Hawks center Alex Len (25) during the second half of an NBA basketball game, Tuesday, Dec. 10, 2019, in Miami. The Heat won 135-121 in overtime.

Associated Press
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Presidents Cup

Continued from Page 17

That's where they meet for perhaps the final time, as captains at Royal Melbourne.

The Presidents Cup starts Thursday, and Woods is attracting all the attention as the first playing captain in 25 years. As much as he refers to the Big Easy as a "giant of a man," no one casts a larger presence in golf than Woods.

Els saw it coming a long time ago. In one of their greatest duels, they matched eagles and birdies on the 18th hole at Kapalua in 2000 before Woods won the playoff with a 40-foot birdie. It was another kick in the gut for Els, who said that day: "He's 24. He's probably going to be bigger than Elvis when he gets into his 40s."

By the end of the year, Els was runner-up to him in consecutive majors by a combined 23 shots.

The 50-year-old Els sat on one side of a long table Wednesday, wearing reading glasses to go over his pairings for the opening session. Woods, who turns 44 at the end of the month, was on the other side of a 2-foot-high board, announcing he would be playing in the first match.

The International team is desperate to end two decades of failing to beat the Americans, who are going for their eighth consecutive victory and already lead 10-1-1 in the series.

For Els, it's another large task.

By now, he's used to it.

"No one of this generation has gotten the credit they probably deserve because Tiger has been Tiger," Adam Scott said. "It's the same for Phil (Mickelson) and Ernie. They have played second fiddle because Tiger has got the great record he has and he beat them quite often, too."

Scott paused briefly, adding with the slightest of smiles, "I think Ernie is maybe using that as some motivation this week."

In most team events, the captain can only do so

much. At Royal Melbourne, Woods has taken on a little more.

The charter flight from the Bahamas arrived on Monday a little later than planned, leaving the U.S. team with only two practice rounds. Woods played 18 holes Tuesday. The next day, he played for a little more than an hour before peeling off to watch the rest of his team play.

He can rely on his assistants — two of them, Fred Couples and Steve Stricker, previously were captains — but he doesn't want to miss out on all the captain's duties. Everyone on the team has portrayed Woods as relentless in detail, sometimes texting at all hours of the night when he has a thought about strategy or pairings.

"You definitely get more texts between 1 and 4 a.m. than any captain, that's for sure," said Justin Thomas, who plays with Woods in the opening fourballs match against Marc Leishman and Joaquin Niemann. "He takes it very seriously. He wants to be a captain that has a great winning record."

Tony Finau was teammates with Woods in his Ryder Cup debut last year and saw his influence as a player.

As captain, he sees another level.

"The detail ... I think he could probably do the weather here and the wind direction for all of us," Finau said. "It doesn't surprise me just how prepared he is because that's the reason why he is who he is. To have him captain the team, a huge part of it is just learning from him. You can't top that type of experience."

Els has gone about his business more quietly, not willing to share specifics on his use of analytics to develop pairings. He has encouraged his players to spend time in practice rounds during tournaments. But he has been unusually guarded in his comments, wanting to keep everything inside the team for now.

"I'll tell you Sunday night what exactly has been transpiring," Els said. "But



International captain Ernie Els, left, and USA captain Tiger Woods shake hands during a press conference ahead of the President's Cup Golf tournament in Melbourne, Australia, Tuesday, Dec. 10, 2019.

Associated Press

we have a system we are following, and I can't let anything out of the bag more than that."

Whatever secrets he is holding, his team still has to chip and putt, to win holes and win matches, to get the crowd on its side early. The

U.S. team has not trailed after any of the sessions since the second round in 2005.

Now it's up to his players. Els, unlike Woods, has no influence on the outcome except for his plan and his leadership.

"He told us his plan early

on, and he's going 100% on that. And I love that," Scott said. "I can get behind someone who is 100% in on something. If it doesn't work, I admire the fact he's gone all in. I don't think we've ever done that before." □

Cole mine: Gerrit, Yankees strike record \$324M, 9-year deal

By **RONALD BLUM**
AP Baseball Writer

SAN DIEGO (AP) — Gerrit Cole quickly ended Stephen Strasburg's tenure as baseball's highest-paid pitcher.

Cole agreed to a \$324 million, nine-year contract with the New York Yankees on Tuesday night, a person familiar with the agreement told The Associated Press.

Cole's deal established marks for pitchers in total dollars, topping the \$245 million, seven-year contract Stephen Strasburg finalized a day earlier to remain with the World Series champion Washington Nationals.

Its \$36 million average is a record for any player, beating the \$35.5 million in outfielder Mike Trout's \$426.5 million, 12-year deal with the Los Angeles Angels that started last season. Cole gets an

even \$36 million annually and can opt out after the 2024 season. He also has a full no-trade provision. After finalizing the agreement for 31-year-old Strasburg, agent Scott Boras predicted he would go even high for Cole, a 29-year-old right-hander. Cole was baseball's most dominant pitcher for much of 2019 and helped the Houston Astros come within one win of their second World Series title in three seasons.

"Obviously, when you are talking about a player at the level of Gerrit Cole, in a lot of ways that's a game-changing type talent," Yankees manager Aaron Boone said earlier in the day. "This is a guy that's really hungry, really driven."

Yankees general manager Cashman visited Cole and wife Amy in California last week, bringing

along Boone, new pitching coach Matt Blake and special adviser Andy Pettitte. After helping Houston beat the Yankees in a six-game AL Championship Series, Cole joins a rotation that includes Luis Severino, Masahiro Tanaka, James Paxton and J.A. Happ or Domingo Germán, who may be suspended at the season's start under baseball's domestic violence policy. In other moves on the second day of the winter meetings:

— Shortstop Didi Gregorius is joining manager Joe Girardi in Philadelphia, agreeing with the Phillies on a \$14 million, one-year contract, a person familiar with the deal told the AP. That person also spoke on condition of anonymity because the agreement, first reported by the New York Post, had not been announced. □

Heat score first 16 points in OT, beat Hawks 135-121

By The Associated Press
MIAMI (AP) — Duncan Robinson tied a franchise record with 10 3-pointers, Bam Adebayo and Jimmy Butler each had triple-doubles and the Miami Heat scored 22 unanswered points down the stretch to beat the Atlanta Hawks 135-121 in overtime on Tuesday night. Kendrick Nunn scored 36 points, one off the Heat rookie record. Adebayo finished with a career-high 30 points, 11 rebounds and 11 assists. Butler had 20 points, a career-high 18 rebounds and 10 assists. And Robinson scored 34 points, on a night when the Heat moved to 11-0 at home. They had to scramble to get there, down by six with less than a minute left in regulation. But Robinson and Butler made 3s late to tie the game, and the Heat opened overtime on a 16-0 run. It was the NBA's widest margin of victory in an overtime game since Oct. 31, 2009,

when Philadelphia beat New York 141-127. De'Andre Hunter scored 28 points, and Trae Young added 21 points and nine assists for Atlanta — which fell to 0-3 against the Heat this season.
76ERS 97, NUGGETS 92
PHILADELPHIA (AP) — Joel Embiid scored 22 points, including two key free throws with 15.3 seconds left, and Tobias Harris added 20 as Philadelphia beat Denver. Matisse Thybulle added 13 points for the Sixers, who are 13-0 in Philadelphia. They have won three straight and seven of eight. Will Barton had 26 points to lead the Nuggets, who have lost three in a row and five of six. Leading scorer Jamal Murray was injured with 6:49 left in the first quarter when he collided with Ben Simmons and didn't return.
HORNETS 114, WIZARDS 107
CHARLOTTE, N.C. (AP) — Devonte Graham scored 29 points, Miles Bridges hit a big 3-pointer with 7.7 seconds left and Char-



Miami Heat forward Duncan Robinson (55) shoots a 3-pointer as Atlanta Hawks forward Jabari Parker (5) defends during overtime of an NBA basketball game, Tuesday, Dec. 10, 2019, in Miami. The Heat won 135-121 in overtime.

Associated Press

lotte beat Washington in a game that featured 20 lead changes. Terry Rozier scored 17 points, Bridges had 16, P.J. Washington added 15 and Cody Zeller and Bismack Biyombo both had double-doubles as Charlotte wrapped up a five-game homestand with a 2-3 record. David Bertans scored a career-high 32 points and made eight 3-pointers for Washington. Rui Hachimura added 18 points and 12

rebounds for the Wizards, who have lost six of seven.
TRAIL BLAZERS 115, KNICKS 87
PORTLAND, Ore. (AP) — Damian Lillard had 31 points, including eight 3-pointers, and Portland handed New York its 10th straight loss. Hassan Whiteside added 17 points and 15 rebounds, and the Trail Blazers ended a two-game skid. Portland led by as many as 32. Julius Randle had 15 points for the Knicks, who have won just four games, fewest

in the NBA. They have one win on the road. The Knicks opened their four-game West Coast trip in disarray after coach David Fizdale was fired on Friday, just hours after he ran practice. Mike Miller was named interim coach, and New York lost 104-103 at home to Indiana the next night. In Portland, New York faced Carmelo Anthony, who played for the Knicks from 2011-17. Anthony finished with 16 points. □

Ravens, 49ers, Saints are top 3 teams in AP Pro32 poll

By SIMMI BUTTAR
AP Pro Football Writer
NEW YORK (AP) — Lamar Jackson and the Baltimore Ravens just keep on soaring. The Ravens clinched a playoff spot last week after they held off the Buffalo Bills 24-17 for their ninth consecutive victory. And the Ravens are again the unanimous choice as the top team in the latest AP Pro32 poll. For the second consecutive week, the Ravens earned all 12 first-place votes for 384 points in balloting Tuesday by media members who regularly cover the NFL. "The road to the AFC championship goes through Baltimore, as the

Ravens win a slugfest over the Bills to maintain control of the No. 1 seed. Lamar Jackson to the Super Bowl in Year 2? Could be," said Newsday's Bob Glauber. The Ravens will open Week 15 as they host the New York Jets on Thursday night. Jimmy Garoppolo and the San Francisco 49ers moved up a spot to No. 2 after their 48-46 win over the NFC South champion New Orleans Saints on Sunday. "If the 49ers and Saints meet again in the NFC championship game, it'll be hard to top the twists and turns provided by both teams in Sunday's thrilling matchup at the Superdome," said Ira Kaufman of Fox 13 in Tam-

pa, Florida. And despite the loss, the Saints inched up to No. 3. "You can't ask for much more from Drew Brees against a tough San Francisco defense, but the Saints couldn't stop the 49ers when it counted," Kaufman said. The Seattle Seahawks dropped two places to No. 4 after their 28-12 loss to the Los Angeles Rams. The Rams gained two spots to round out the top 10 and became the third team from the NFC West in the first third of the poll. For the second week in a row, the Kansas City Chiefs are tied in the poll. This time, the Chiefs moved up two places, joining Seattle at No. 4, after holding off



Baltimore Ravens outside linebacker Matt Judon (99) celebrates a 24-17 win over the Buffalo Bills after an NFL football game in Orchard Park, N.Y., Sunday, Dec. 8, 2019.

Associated Press

the New England Patriots 23-16 to clinch the AFC West. The Patriots dropped two spots No. 7 after their second consecutive loss. The Green Bay Packers, tied with the Chiefs last week, remained at No. 6 after topping the Washington Redskins 20-15. The Minnesota Vikings

jumped two spots to No. 8 after topping the Detroit Lions. And the Bills stayed at No. 9 after their loss to the Ravens. The Bills play another high-profile AFC North team when they head to Pittsburgh for a rare appearance on "Sunday Night Football." □

Catch your own dinner with Driftwood!

Motto at Driftwood Restaurant: Hook and Cook your Own Fish!



Oranjestad- Renaissance Marina Downtown is home to the Driftwood Fishing Charters, the successful fishermen of the established seafood restaurant Driftwood. Herby senior and Herby Junior both share a passion and love for fishing. They know what the local waters have to offer and what fresh fish really means. Over 30 years ago, the idea for the fishing charter was born.

Captain Herby would catch the fish to be served at the restaurant the same day. That concept still lives, what is 'hooked' during the day is cooked in the evening at the restaurant.

Herby shares his experience with his crew, who take out guests daily on their tournament rigged 35ft twin engine

Bertram "Driftwood" or on their more spacious 37ft twin engine Bertram called "Living Easy". Both yachts are available for charters from 8am to 12 noon, or from 1 to 5pm (6-hour trips also available). To book a fishing charter visit www.driftwoodfishingcharters.com or call Herbert direct at (297)-5924040.



Have an authentic seafood dining experience at Driftwood Restaurant, situated in the characteristic downtown Oranjestad. This comfortable downtown restaurant has a long tradition (30 years) of serving the freshest fish, the biggest shrimp, and the most succulent Caribbean Lobster.

Opening Hours: 5:00pm to 10.30pm (closed on Sundays)

For reservations visit www.driftwoodaruba.com or call (297)-5832515

Address: Klipstraat 12. Oranjestad, Aruba

Study: Inconsistent seams, player behavior behind HR uptick

By JAKE SEINER
AP Sports Writer

SAN DIEGO (AP) — Baseballs used during the 2019 regular season had less drag on average, contributing to a power surge that resulted in a record number of home runs, according to a study commissioned by Major League Baseball and released by the league Wednesday.

The report produced by a committee of science professors said inconsistencies in the seams of the baseballs, as well as "changes in player behavior," were chief culprits for the spike in home runs. Batters connected 6,776 times in the regular season, smashing the record of 6,105 set in 2017.

The committee says it did not find evidence that MLB intentionally altered the baseballs and believes the inconsistencies were due to "manufacturing variability." The balls are hand



A baseball lies on packed dirt after for a short batting practice during a tour of the under construction baseball field at the new Texas Rangers stadium in Arlington, Texas, Wednesday, Dec. 4, 2019.

Associated Press

sewn by workers at Rawlings' factory in Costa Rica. The 27-page report was written by Alan Nathan, Jim Albert, Peko Hosoi and Lloyd Smith.

A series of recommendations were provided. The scientists say MLB should consider installing humi-

dors at all 30 ballparks "to reduce the variability in storage conditions," and install atmospheric tracking systems in each stadium.

They believe Rawlings should begin tracking dates that baseballs are manufactured and

shipped, and they also have suggested a study with a larger sample size to explore the possibility that carry is influenced by the rubbing mud applied to bright, white baseballs before they are used in games.

The group also confirmed suspicions by players and coaches that the "juiced" ball was carrying less during the 2019 postseason. Cardinals manager Mike Shildt said during the NL Championship Series that St. Louis' analytics team believed fly balls were traveling 4 1/2 feet less on average. That backed a study published by data scientist Rob Arthur at Baseball Prospects showing the balls suddenly had less drag.

The scientists could not determine why the playoff balls weren't flying as far, though. MLB has said the postseason balls were pulled from the same batch as the regular sea-

son ones. The aerodynamics of the baseballs were found to be notably different even within each season. The committee cited "significant ball-to-ball variation in the baseball drag that is large compared to the year-to-year change in the average drag."

The committee concluded that 60% of the home run surge across 2018-19 could be attributed to an increase in carry, with 40% due to players attempting to hit more fly balls.

The scientists were set to address reporters at baseball's winter meetings later Wednesday. They will be joined by MLB executives Morgan Sword and Chris Young, as well as Rawlings president and CEO Michael Zlaket. MLB owns a minority stake in Rawlings, and Peter Seidler, the San Diego Padres general partner, has chief oversight of the equity firm with a majority share. □

Jarry's shutout streak ends as Montreal beats Penguins 4-1

By The Associated Press

PITTSBURGH (AP) — Tomas Tatar's 10th goal of the season ended Tristan Jarry's franchise-record shutout streak and sparked the Montreal Canadiens to a 4-1 victory over the Pittsburgh Penguins on Tuesday night. Jarry's shutout run ended at 177:15 on Tatar's power-play goal 12:24 into the second period that tied the game. Joel Armia beat Jarry less than four minutes later to put the Canadiens in front to stay and Shea Weber scored with just 15 seconds left in the period. Montreal won for the fourth time in its last 12 meetings with the Penguins.

Carey Price surrendered Jake Guentzel's 17th goal just 2:59 into the first period but quickly settled down to outduel Jarry. Price finished with 33 saves as Montreal won for the third time in four games following an eight-game winless streak. Jarry began the night leading the league in goals-against average and save percentage thanks to a surge that included back-to-back shutouts against St. Louis and Arizona last week. A point-blank stop on Nick Cousins early in the second period helped Jarry slip past the Tomas Vokoun's shutout mark of 173:06 set in 2013, but Jarry's luck ran out shortly after he surpassed Vokoun in the team record book.

Some sloppy play in front of Jarry helped the Canadiens finally break through. Pittsburgh was on the penalty kill in the second period when defenseman John Marino and forward Brandon Tanev whiffed on clearing attempts. Montreal's Phillip Danault grabbed the loose puck, slipped a pass to Brendan Gallagher to set up a two-on-none. Gallagher set up Tatar, who beat Jarry to the short side. It was the first goal Jarry allowed since the second period of a loss to Columbus on Nov. 29.

LIGHTNING 2, PANTHERS 1
SUNRISE, Fla. (AP) — Steven Stamkos and Alex Killorn scored to lead Tampa Bay over Florida. Andrei Vasilevskiy stopped



Pittsburgh Penguins goaltender Tristan Jarry stops a shot during the first period of an NHL hockey game against the Montreal Canadiens in Pittsburgh, Tuesday, Dec. 10, 2019.

Associated Press

27 shots for Tampa Bay. Evgenii Dadonov had the goal for the Panthers. Sergei Bobrovsky made a season-high 46 saves in his third straight start.

SABRES 5, BLUES 2

BUFFALO, N.Y. (AP) — Jack Eichel scored two goals to extend his NHL-leading point streak to 14 games, and Buffalo beat St. Louis. Sam Reinhart, Johan Larsson and Zemgus Girgensons each had a goal and an assist as the Sabres won their second straight. Linus Ullmark made 28 saves.

Troy Brouwer and Alex Pietrangolo had goals for the Blues, who have lost three in a row following a four-game winning streak. Jake Allen stopped 28 shots.

JETS 5, RED WINGS 1

WINNIPEG, Manitoba (AP) — Blake Wheeler, Andrew Copp and Patrik Laine scored in a two-minute span in the second period and Winnipeg dealt Detroit Red its 12th straight loss. Wheeler began the barrage at 16:43 of the second when he beat Eric Comrie, who was making his first start in goal since Detroit acquired him in a trade with Arizona on Nov. 30.

Copp and Laine followed with goals 11 seconds apart, boosting the score to 4-1 by the 18:43 mark. Adam Lowry scored a first-period, short-handed goal and Mark Scheifele added his team-leading 14th of

the season on the power play at 5:04 of the third. Copp and Wheeler also each had an assist for the Jets (19-10-2).

Christoffer Ehn scored his first goal of the season for the Red Wings (7-22-3), who are 0-10-2 during their skid. Detroit has the worst record in the NHL at 7-22-3.

PREDATORS 3, SHARKS 1

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (AP) — Calle Jarnkrok had a goal and an assist in the third period, Juuse Saros made 24 saves and Nashville beat slumping San Jose.

Nick Bonino and Ryan Johansen also scored in the third for the Predators, winners of two straight.

Timo Meier scored and Martin Jones made 28 saves for the Sharks, who have lost five in a row.

DUCKS 3, WILD 2, SO

ST. PAUL, Minn. (AP) — Rickard Rickell and Max Comtois scored in the shootout and Anaheim beat Minnesota for its first win in six road games. Rakell and Cam Fowler scored for the Ducks in a dominant first period during which they had a 14-1 advantage in shots on goal and the Wild lost center Eric Staal to an injury. Ryan Hartman put the Wild on the board in the second and Ryan Donato tied the game early in third. Donato had a breakaway early in overtime that Ryan Getzlaf thwarted with a tripping penalty, and the

Wild failed to convert on the power play for the fifth time. John Gibson denied Parise in the shootout. Kevin Fiala went wide right with his attempt.

STARS 2, DEVILS 0

DALLAS (AP) — Ben Bishop made 26 saves, 16 in the third period, and Dallas beat New Jersey, hours after the Stars fired head coach Jim Montgomery. It was Bishop's first shutout this season and 32nd of his career in Rick Bowness's first game as interim head coach.

Radek Faksa and Joe Pavelski scored in the first period against Devils goalie Mackenzie Blackwood, who made 33 saves. The Stars won their third straight game.

HURRICANES 6, OILERS 3

EDMONTON, Alberta (AP) — Sebastian Aho scored two goals and Carolina beat Edmonton.

Nino Niederreiter, Ryan Dzingel, Jordan Martinook and Dougie Hamilton also scored for the Hurricanes (19-11-1), who have won three straight. Zack Kassian scored twice and Ryan Nugent-Hopkins added a goal for the Oilers (18-11-4), who have lost three of their last four.

FLAMES 5, COYOTES 2

GLENDALE, Ariz. (AP) — Sean Monahan scored for the fourth straight game, Cam Talbot stopped 46 shots and Calgary extend-

ed its winning streak to six straight games under interim coach Geoff Ward with a win over listless Arizona.

Calgary played the night before, but had the early jump, scoring two goals on its first four shots in the opening 4:03. The Flames kept on scoring, improving to 7-0-1 following a six-game winless streak (0-5-1). Michael Frolik and Zac Rinaldo each had a goal and an assist. Johnny Gaudreau and Milan Lucic also scored for Calgary.

MAPLE LEAFS 4, CANUCKS 1

VANCOUVER, British Columbia (AP) — John Tavares had two goals and an assist and Toronto snapped Vancouver's two-game winning streak. Auston Matthews and Za-

ch Hyman also scored for the Leafs (15-13-4), who have won the opening two games of a four-game trip. Mitch Marner and Justin Holl each had two assists. Toronto is 6-3-0 since Sheldon Keefe replaced Mike Babcock as coach.

Josh Leivo scored for the Canucks (15-12-4). Jacob Markstrom made 22 saves. Toronto goalie Frederik Andersen made 38 saves, including stopping Vancouver's Brock Boeser on three breakaways, two in the third period.

GOLDEN KNIGHTS 5, BLACK-HAWKS 1

LAS VEGAS (AP) — Marc-Andre Fleury made 28 saves in his return to the lineup and Vegas beat Chicago. It was Fleury's first game in net since the death of his father, Andre.

Fleury, who hadn't started since a 4-2 loss to Edmonton on Nov. 23, improved to 11-6-5 against Chicago and 69-38-13 in December. Reilly Smith, Deryk Englund, William Karlsson, Max Pacioretty and Ryan Reaves scored for the Golden Knights, who hit the road for two games on a 5-1-1 run. Corey Crawford, who dropped to 1-4-0 against Vegas, made 32 saves for Chicago, which played its third road game in six nights. Dominik Kubalik scored with 27 seconds left to spoil Fleury's bid for his 59th career shutout. □

Cole mine: Gerrit, Yankees strike record \$324M, 9-year deal

By **RONALD BLUM**
AP Baseball Writer

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The person spoke on condition of anonymity because the agreement had not been announced.

Cole's deal established marks for pitchers in total dollars, topping the \$245 million, seven-year contract Stephen Strasburg finalized a day earlier to remain with the World Series champion Washington Nationals.

Its \$36 million average is a record for any player, beating the \$35.5 million in outfielder Mike Trout's \$426.5 million, 12-year deal with the Los Angeles Angels that started last season. Cole gets an even \$36 million annually and can opt out after the 2024 season. He also has a full no-trade provision.

After finalizing the agreement for 31-year-old Strasburg, agent Scott Boras predicted he would go even high for Cole, a 29-year-old right-hander.

Cole was baseball's most dominant pitcher for much of 2019 and helped the Houston Astros come with-



In this Oct. 15, 2019, file photo, Houston Astros starting pitcher Gerrit Cole (45) delivers against the New York Yankees during the first inning of Game 3 of baseball's American League Championship Series, in New York.

Associated Press

in one win of their second World Series title in three seasons.

"Obviously, when you are talking about a player at the level of Gerrit Cole, in a lot of ways that's a game-changing type talent," Yankees manager Aaron Boone said earlier in the day.

"This is a guy that's really hungry, really driven."

Yankees general manager Cashman visited Cole and wife Amy in California last week, bringing along Boone, new pitching coach Matt Blake and special adviser Andy Pettitte.

After helping Houston beat the Yankees in a six-game AL Championship Series, Cole joins a rotation that includes Luis Severino, Masahiro Tanaka, James Paxton and J.A. Happ or Domingo Germán, who may be suspended at the season's start under baseball's domestic violence policy.

In other moves on the second day of the winter meetings:

— Shortstop Didi Gregorius is joining manager Joe Girardi in Philadelphia, agreeing with the Phillies on a \$14 million, one-year contract, a person familiar with the

deal told the AP.

That person also spoke on condition of anonymity because the agreement, first reported by the New York Post, had not been announced.

— San Francisco acquired infielder Zack Cozart and infield prospect Will Wilson from the Angels for a player to be named or cash, taking on Cozart's salary of nearly \$12.7 million next year.

— Right-hander Kevin Gausman agreed to a \$9 million, one-year contract with the Giants, eight days after Cincinnati allowed

him to become a free agent.

— Outfielder Adam Jones and the Orix Buffaloes of Japan's Pacific League agreed to an \$8 million, two-year contract.

— Minnesota Twins finalized a \$20 million, two-year contract with suspended pitcher Michael Pineda and a \$4.25 million, one-year deal with catcher Alex Avila.

— Washington retained two more players from its championship team, finalizing a \$10 million, two-year contract with catcher Yan Gomes and a \$6.25 million, one-year contract with infielder Howie Kendrick, who provided key hits in the postseason.

— The Chicago White Sox acquired outfielder Nomar Mazara from Texas for minor league outfielder Steele Walker.

— Houston manager AJ Hinch said he couldn't publicly answer questions about Major League Baseball's investigation into allegations by former Astros pitcher Mike Fiers that Houston used electronics to steal signs in 2017.

Before finalizing Cole's deal, Boras held his usual metaphor-laden winter meetings news conference and said this offseason's uptick in the free agent market was a response to the fourth straight season of decreased major league attendance. □



In this Saturday, Oct. 19, 2019, file photo, New York Yankees shortstop Didi Gregorius prepares to take batting practice before Game 6 of baseball's American League Championship Series against the Houston Astros in Houston.

Associated Press

By **RONALD BLUM**
AP Baseball Writer
SAN DIEGO (AP) — Free-

agent shortstop Didi Gregorius is reuniting with manager Joe Girardi in

AP source: Gregorius, Phillies agree to \$14M, 1-year deal

Philadelphia, agreeing with the Phillies on a \$14 million, one-year contract, a person familiar with the deal told The Associated Press.

The person spoke on condition of anonymity Tuesday because the agreement, first reported by the New York Post, had not been announced.

Gregorius spent the last five years with the New York Yankees, the first three playing for Girardi as Derek Jeter's successor at shortstop.

Girardi replaced Gabe Kapler as the Phillies' manager following a disappointing season in which Philadelphia faded to fourth place in the NL East. The team went 81-81 despite signing slugger Bryce Harper to a \$330 million, 13-year contract.

Gregorius' 2019 debut was delayed until June 7 after Tommy John surgery on Oct. 17, 2018, to repair an elbow ligament torn during Game 2 of the AL Division Series at Boston. The left-handed hitter batted

.238 with 16 homers and 61 RBIs this year, leaving him with a .264 average, 110 homers and 417 RBIs in eight major league seasons.

"Didi has been a great player for us. He's a great person," current Yankees manager Aaron Boone said. "Teams are lucky to have him because he's a really good player. And I think obviously going into a winter where he's healthy, would expect a really full, productive season from him." □

MLB instituting 3-batter minimum for 2020 season

By RONALD BLUM
AP Baseball Writer

SAN DIEGO (AP) — Major League Baseball is pushing ahead with a rules change for 2020 that requires pitchers to face at least three batters or finish a half-inning.

Baseball Commissioner Rob Manfred also said Wednesday the injured list for pitchers will revert to 15 days from 10 days. In tandem, pitchers optioned to the minors will have to spend 15 days with farm teams before they can be recalled unless they replace a pitcher going on the IL.

As part of a March 8 agreement with the players' association, management had the right to make the changes for 2020.

"I've been kind of contemplating things in my head, what we want to do and what we want to see and the kind of pitchers we want in our bullpen," said Dave Martinez, manager of the World Series champion Washington Nationals said. All pitchers must face at least three batters or end a half-inning, unless injured. While the union refused to

agree to that provision, it also said it will not challenge it.

"It's already come up in a lot of conversations. It's definitely on my brain," new Chicago Cubs manager David Ross said. "You will see definitely see a change."

New Philadelphia manager Joe Girardi said the use of one-batter situational left-handers had decreased in recent seasons.

"I think the game has kind of went to multiple-inning pitchers anyway, in a sense guys that can give you more than three outs," he said.

"Depending how many left-handers they have, maybe you spread your left-handers out. So if they have a guy that is efficient in getting left-handed-hitters out, you surround him with two beasts that are right-handed hitters."

Active rosters will increase by one to 26 from opening day through Aug. 31 and will drop from 40 to 28 from Sept. 1 through the end of the regular season. What had been a 26th player for



Commissioner Rob Manfred speaks during the Major League Baseball winter meetings Wednesday, Dec. 11, 2019, in San Diego.

Associated Press

certain day-night double-headers through Aug. 31 will become a 27th player in those situations.

Teams may carry no more than 13 pitchers through Aug. 31 and no more than 14 from Sept. 1 through the end of the regular season. Baseball's regular injured list will remain at 10 days for position players along

with a 10-day option recall minimum. There still will be a seven-day concussion IL and a 60-day IL for longer-term injuries.

Position players will be prohibited from pitching through the ninth inning unless the player's team is winning or losing by six or more runs when he takes the mound.

Two-way players are exempt if they have pitched 20 innings and made 20 starts with at least three plate appearances in the current or previous year.

MLB is still working with team local television networks to determine whether half-inning breaks for games not on national TV can be cut to 1 minute, 55 seconds. □

Russian boxers to boycott Olympics if sanctions not lifted

By JAMES ELLINGWORTH
AP Sports Writer

Russian boxers will only take part in the Tokyo Olympics if doping sanctions forcing them to compete as neutral athletes are overturned, the general secretary of the Russian Boxing Federation told The Associated Press on Wednesday. Umar Kremlev said he has spoken with the Olympic boxing team and they "unanimously" rejected the conditions laid out by the World Anti-Doping Agency as punishment for manipulating doping data.

The WADA sanctions, announced on Monday, ban the use of the Russian team name, flag or anthem at a range of major sports competitions over the next four years, including next year's Olympics.

"They said we won't go without our flag and anthem," Kremlev said. "We aren't



Wires go to microphones above a logo of the Russian Olympic Committee during President of the Russian Olympic Committee Stanislav Pozdnyakov's news conference in Moscow, Russia, Monday, Dec. 9, 2019.

Associated Press

going for medals, but for that feeling that I brought the highest honor home for my country."

Separately, the speaker of Russia's upper house of parliament said Russia could create an alternative to the Olympics.

"This ruling show the clear crisis in international sports institutions. I believe that Russia could host its own games at home," Valentina Matvienko said in comments reported by the Interfax news agency. There is a precedent. Af-

ter the Russian Revolution of 1917, the Soviet Union refused to compete in the Olympics and hosted its own Spartakiads — named after the ancient rebel slave Spartacus — with a strong socialist slant. However, the Soviet Union began competing at the Olympics in 1952 and Russians generally take great pride in the country's Olympic achievements since then.

If the sanctions aren't overturned, Kremlev said Russian boxers would prefer to turn pro rather than compete at the Olympics.

"A world champion (in professional boxing) is better known than an Olympic champion," Kremlev said, adding the Russian anthem would be played before pro title fights.

Kremlev said boxers are being asked to shoulder the blame for offenses committed in other sports. He

said they would still stay at home even if Russia's athletes in other sports decided to take part.

"If other sports are guilty and people have breached the WADA code, why are we punished?" he said. "We are for honest sport and against doping. We want our sport to be clean ... If someone breaks the rules, we push them out."

Russia is a major power in amateur and Olympic boxing. It hosted both men's and women's world championships this year, finishing at the top of the medals table at the women's event and second in the men's championships. The International Olympic Committee has taken direct charge of boxing at the Tokyo Olympics after criticizing chronic financial problems and infighting at the International Boxing Association. □

Meet the scholar who diagnosed ‘surveillance capitalism’

By **FRANK BAJAK**
AP Technology Writer

Until the Cambridge Analytica scandal turned what had been a slowly gestating backlash against the technology industry's intrusive trajectory into a torrent, people struggled to articulate what underlay the societal damage it was exacting.

They did not include Shoshana Zuboff.

The Harvard business professor emerita had already spent years developed a damning theory. It found a big audience with U.S. publication in January of her 700-page “The Age of Surveillance Capitalism,” which skewers tech giants led by Facebook and Google.

Zuboff hasn't stood still since.

Her unflattering indictment of Big Tech evokes how they harvest the details of our lives and make billions from that data, all the while glueing our attention more firmly to their platforms.

A bestseller in Canada and Britain, the book published is being translated into 17 languages and has inspired a pair of small theater productions. Zuboff, meanwhile, has been counseling politicians, crisscrossing the Atlantic for public forums from Los Angeles to Rome and hitting



In this Wednesday, March 27, 2019 photo, author Shoshana Zuboff speaks to a reporter in her home in Maine. Zuboff is the author of “The Age of Surveillance Capitalism,” a book about how tech companies collect and use personal data.

Associated Press

the podcast circuit.

She offered input on several pending U.S. privacy bills and wrote a 34-page policy paper for the House Judiciary Committee, whose antitrust panel is studying Big Tech's potential abuse of its market dominance.

Zuboff has “put the language of economics around the experience that we all know we're having,” says Beeban Kidron, a film director and U.K. House of Lords mem-

ber who spearheaded child-protection rules limiting how apps gather data and tempt kids to linger online. “She's a rock star.”

Early on, Zuboff realized researchers had missed the importance of the ambient data that digital services collect — where we use them, for how long, what we like, what we linger on and with whom we associate.

They were calling it “digital exhaust.”

But Zuboff saw that this data wasn't just an unexpected byproduct, says Chris Hoofnagle, a University of California-Berkeley privacy expert. “It is the product.”

Tech industry allies denounce Zuboff's thesis as conspiracy-minded hyperbole. Consumers willingly trade their personal data for access to valuable services that don't cost them a cent, they argue. Google and Facebook declined to

discuss Zuboff or her book. But after more than a year of tech-related privacy scandals, malign election-interference and online platform-fueled extremism, investigations opened by state attorneys general and the U.S. government's first tentative steps toward reining in its technology titans, it's become clear that Zuboff helped crystallize previously vague apprehensions about the tech industry.

Zuboff's indictment is straightforward: Tech companies suck up our data trails then use those insights to steer us toward commercial interactions, develop their next addictive apps and predict our future behavior — effectively molding individual behavior. Worse, she says, these invasive business practices are spreading. “By now this is a virus that has infected every economic sector,” Zuboff told a meeting of international parliamentarians in May.

Zuboff traces the origin of surveillance capitalism to 2001 as Google, then little more than a search engine, considered going public. Faced with the need to generate revenue, its founders decided to mine the data Google amasses when people make searches. □

YouTube cracks down on racist, sexist and similar insults

By **RACHEL LERMAN**
SAN FRANCISCO (AP) —

YouTube is taking another step to curb hateful and violent speech on its site.

The video streaming company said it will now take down videos that lob insults at people based on race, gender expression, sexual orientation or other “protected attributes.” The Google-owned company will also prohibit veiled threats of violence, taking a step further into moderating what people can say on the videos they create and upload.

YouTube has been slapped with criticism from politicians, viewers and video



This April 4, 2018, file photo shows a YouTube logo on a t-shirt worn by a person near a YouTube office building in San Bruno, Calif.

Associated Press

creators for the material it allows on — and bans from — the site.

The site has been accused of allowing and fostering hate speech and extremism and creating spaces for harassment to linger online, along with other digital sites that allow people to upload their own material, such as Facebook and Twitter.

YouTube has been reviewing its policies and guidelines for about two years, Matt Halprin, the company's vice president of trust and safety, said in an interview.

He said the company tries to find a balance be-

tween allowing freedom of expression and keeping hateful speech to a minimum.

YouTube has long prohibited outright threats of violence. In June, it updated its hate speech policies to ban videos with white supremacist and Neo-Nazi viewpoints.

But the company also received significant pushback that month after it allowed a video to remain on the site from conservative commentator Steven Crowder.

In the video, Crowder used homophobic slurs aimed at Vox reporter Carlos Maza. □



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Saudi Aramco starts trading, gaining 10% and reaching \$1.8T

By **AYA BATRAWY**
Associated Press

RIYADH, Saudi Arabia
(AP) — Saudi Arabia's oil

company Aramco began trading for the first time on Wednesday, gaining 10% in its first moments on the market in a dramatic debut that pushed its value to \$1.88 trillion, higher than any other listed company in the world.

Trading on the Saudi Tadawul stock exchange came after a mammoth \$25.6 billion initial public offering that set the record as the biggest ever in history.

Aramco, owned by the state, has sold a 1.5% stake in the company, pricing its shares before trading at 32 Saudi riyals, or what is \$8.53.

At pre-trading auction earlier in the morning, bids for Aramco reached the 10% limit on stock price fluctuation allowed by Tadawul. That pushed the price of Aramco shares in its debut to 35.2 riyals, or \$9.39 a share.

Aramco is now the most valuable listed company in the world, worth more than Microsoft or Apple. It's also worth more than the top five oil companies — Exxon Mobil, Total, Royal Dutch Shell, Chevron and BP — combined.

Aramco is selling 0.5% of its shares to individual retail investors — most of whom are Saudi nationals — and 1% to institutional investors,



This Sept. 15, 2019 file photo, shows storage tanks at the North Jiddah bulk plant, an Aramco oil facility, in Jiddah, Saudi Arabia.

most of which are Saudi and Gulf-based funds. The retail portion was limited to Saudi citizens, residents of Saudi Arabia or nationals of Gulf Arab states.

Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman plans to use the money raised from the sale of a sliver of the kingdom's crown jewel to diversify the country's economy and fund major national projects that create jobs for millions of young Saudis entering the workforce.

What the 34-year-old crown prince had initially sought was a \$2 trillion valuation for Aramco and

the sale of up to 5% of the company - on an international stock exchange as well as the Saudi market - that could raise \$100 billion.

Instead, potential buyers outside Saudi Arabia thought his \$2 trillion valuation was too high. With the gains made on Tadawul and a strong local push, the company moves closer to clinching that \$2 trillion mark without even listing internationally.

"They have had to launch the IPO on their own stock exchange as the valuation was unlikely to be achieved elsewhere," said John Colley, associate

dean at Warwick Business School in the U.K.

He said the surging price on launch suggests that buying may be from those affiliated to the crown prince.

In the lead up to the flotation, there had been a strong push for Saudis, including princes and businessmen, to contribute to what's seen locally as a moment of national pride, and even duty.

A brief ceremony on the exchange floor as trading started on Wednesday saw a countdown in Arabic, the sounding of a bell, a light show with music and applause all around. Later,

at a celebration at the Fairmont hotel in Riyadh, Aramco Chairman Yasir Al-Rumayyan, described the sale as "a proud and historic moment for Saudi Aramco and our majority shareholder, the kingdom." He said it demonstrates further significant progress toward Saudi Arabia's transformation, economic growth and diversification.

Aramco, which has exclusive rights to produce and sell the kingdom's energy reserves, was founded in 1933 with America's Standard Oil Co. before becoming fully owned by Saudi Arabia four decades ago.

Strong demand for Aramco's stock has so far been mostly drawn from Saudi funds, rather than the wider net of international investors the crown prince's economic diversification plan may need to succeed.

While the sale of Aramco is a step toward raising new streams of capital for the government's Public Investment Fund, it is only part of a much larger transformation needed to move the economy away from reliance on oil exports for revenue.

Zachary Cefaratti, chief executive officer of Dalma Capital which invested in Aramco through funds, said he anticipates the company will soon become the first in the world valued at over \$2 trillion. □

Associated Press

Mutts



6 Chix



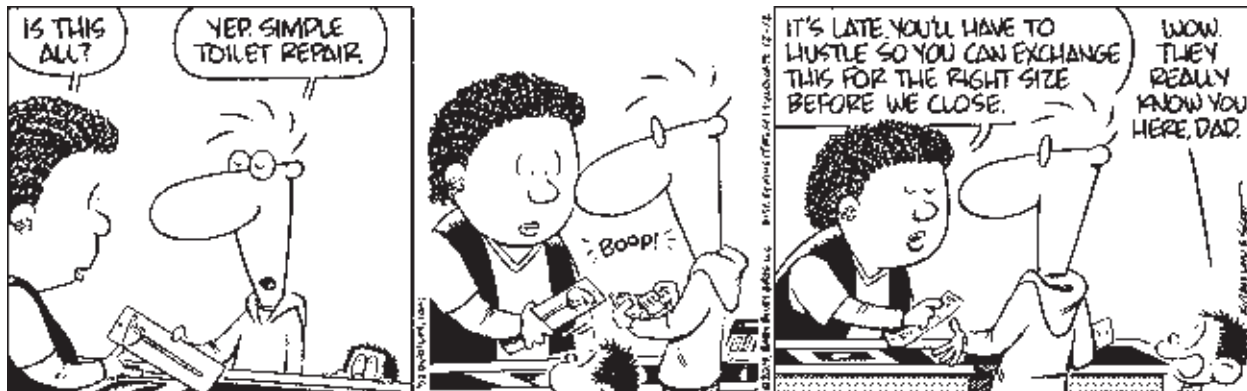
Blondie



Mother Goose & Grimm



Baby Blues



Zits



Conceptis Sudoku

3				5				9
1	7			3		4		2 8
		8					2	
	1			2			8	
		7					4	
2 3			8		1		9 7	
9				4				6

Difficulty Level ★★★

Sudoku is a number-placing puzzle based on a 9x9 grid with several given numbers. The object is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the same number only once. The difficulty level of the Conceptis Sudoku increases from Monday to Sunday.

Yesterday's puzzle answer

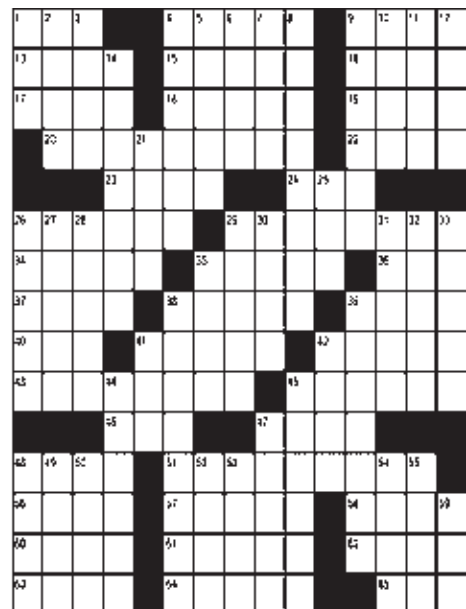
6	1	8	2	5	7	9	4	3
5	3	4	1	6	9	7	2	8
9	2	7	3	4	8	6	5	1
8	4	9	7	1	3	5	6	2
1	6	2	8	9	5	4	3	7
7	5	3	4	2	6	1	8	9
3	9	6	5	8	1	2	7	4
2	8	1	6	7	4	3	9	5
4	7	5	9	3	2	8	1	6

ACROSS

- 1 Repetitive twitch
- 4 Visceral-maker
- 9 Large trees
- 13 "we" that ends "we."
- 15 Romantic one
- 16 Dac to Ham
- 17 Shm & Japnet
- 17 Shine
- 18 Give one's news
- 19 Country in Africa
- 20 "to the plate" came forward & acted
- 22 Fail to include
- 23 Breathe one's ash
- 24 Word attached to "rest or bank"
- 26 "up" devices
- 29 Roost "went saddleless"
- 34 Elegance
- 35 Looked toward
- 36 Light source
- 37 Old Testament book
- 38 Tea "urs"
- 39 Grow weary
- 40 Polished oil
- 41 Desires
- 42 Tureen implement
- 43 "the agent aquatic mammal"
- 45 Wags leisurely
- 46 Reply to a letter's joke
- 47 Tom's spurd
- 48 Jungle cat
- 51 Waking about pompously
- 56 Writing to reconsider
- 57 Gland or sprout
- 58 Cheese from the "veiter and"
- 60 Sophie's lover's occupation
- 61 Prefix for act or net
- 62 Fly off the handle
- 63 Shoe/ace problem
- 64 Requirement
- 65 "Sun" over "State" abbr.

DOWN

- 1 along with "to" low
- 2 Woes
- 3 Blood "trombus"
- 4 Incines
- 5 Managed to handle one's problems
- 6 Passionate
- 7 Restaurantist
- 8 Reads
- 9 Bury
- 10 Fruit of the "undes"
- 11 Trio of kings
- 12 Injured with a gun
- 14 Luke Ingrid Bergman & Bjorn Borg
- 21 Fruit stones
- 25 Maroon or burgundy
- 26 Leftover bit
- 27 Mickey Mouse's dog
- 28 In a bit
- 29 Keep a roasting turkey moist
- 30 Play dimensions
- 31 Take "speak to privately"
- 32 One of the Three Stooges
- 33 Leg omelet
- 35 Marshes
- 38 Downward spiral
- 39 More delectable
- 41 Wine and dine
- 42 Pi age; powder
- 44 Mercury or Mars
- 45 Part of GM
- 47 "out; paid no attention to"
- 48 "choc" entrée choice
- 49 Check "show osnoem" for
- 50 Omelette
- 52 Fork prong
- 53 Alary "nevertheless"
- 54 Where to find Bismarck's abd.
- 55 Popular singer Lady
- 59 Germs



Created by Jacqueline E. Matthews 12/12/19

Wednesday's Puzzle Solved

TAC	ADORE	ALPS
COPD	PEAL	BOOT
HOPE	GLOSMOBILE	
ILL	CLASH	RENEW
ITALY	GAS	
PACINO	WILSON	
ADAMS	CLEFS	VOW
PUBS	FLEET	BETA
ALL	PLAID	BARO
TEDIUM	FIELDS	
WAX	MATZO	
EBSEN	SPIKE	OFF
CELLOPHANE	SKIT	
HAIL	RIGOR	HERD
OUTS	EVERY	EDS

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In this Oct. 1, 2019 file photo, President Jair Bolsonaro attends a ceremony to launch an agro program at the Planalto presidential palace in Brasilia, Brazil.

Associated Press

Brazil's Bolsonaro calls activist Greta Thunberg a "brat"

MARCELO DE SOUSA and HELENA ALVES
Associated Press

RIO DE JANEIRO (AP) — Brazil's President Jair Bolsonaro on Tuesday called young Swedish environmental activist Greta Thunberg a "brat" after she expressed concern about the slayings of indigenous Brazilians in the Amazon. Bolsonaro questioned the coverage news media have given Thunberg, 16, who on Sunday tweeted a link to a story about the murder of two indigenous people in Brazil's Maranhao state.

"Greta said that the Indians died because they were defending the Amazon," Bolsonaro told a group of journalists. "It's impressive that the press is giving space to a brat like that," he added, using the Portuguese word "pirralha." Following Bolsonaro's comments, Thunberg changed the bio on her Twitter profile to say "Pirralha."

Thunberg became a symbol for youth demanding radical change to confront climate change when she sparked global school strikes.

Her comments about the deaths of the indigenous people came as the U.N. was hosting its international climate change conference, where Brazil's environmental policies have been the subject of criticism. Deforestation of its Amazon rose nearly 30% in the 12 months through July. "Indigenous people are being literally murdered for trying to protect the forest (sic) from illegal deforestation," she tweeted. "Over and over again. It is shameful that the world remains silent about this." □

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Classifieds

Halley Time Travel

Marriott Surf Club

Gold Season
2 BR Garden View \$ 5 K
2 BR Ocean View \$ 7 K
2 BR Ocean Side \$ 8 K
2 BR Ocean Front \$14K
3 BR Ocean View \$13K

Marriott Ocean Club

Gold Season
1 BR Ocean View \$ 4 K
1 BR Ocean Front \$ 9 K
2 BR Ocean View \$ 8 K
2 BR Ocean Front \$14K

Divi Phoenix

2 BR Penthouse wk 49 and 50 building 7 on the 7 th floor
32 weeks remain \$ 24 K each
2 BR wk 50 building 6 3rd floor
33 weeks remain \$22 K

Divi Village

studio wk 47 and 48 \$ 5 K each building A with 30 weeks

La Cabana Beach and Casino

2 BR wk 48 and 49
E - unit ocean front ground floor \$15 K each

Renaissance Suites

1 BR wk 48 harbor V.
5th floor \$5 K
1 BR wk 49 and 50 pool OV
3 rd floor \$6,5 K each
1 BR Wk 51 harbor view
5 th floor \$ 9K

Divi Village

1 BR wk 50
building C 3rd floor
17 weeks remain \$ 6K

Divi Links

1 BR wk 51
Birdie 1 with 26 weeks remain \$12.5 K

Divi Links

1 BR WK 48 Birdie 2
with 30 weeks remain \$ 5 K
2 BR wk 51 Birdie 1
26 weeks remain \$24 K

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In this Aug. 16, 2019, file photo, large icebergs float away as the sun rises near Kulusuk, Greenland. Associated Press

Arctic habitats and cultures on thin ice as region warms

By **CHRISTINA LARSON**
AP Science Writer

WASHINGTON (AP) — Rising temperatures and shrinking snow and ice cover in the Arctic are endangering habitats, fisheries and local cultures, according to a report issued Tuesday by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration.

“A lot of people think of the Arctic as being a far-away place, but the loss of ice is affecting people now — it’s changing peoples’ lives,” said Don Perovich, a Dartmouth College geophysicist who contributed to the report. “It isn’t just a bunch of cold statistics.”

The Bering Sea, which lies between Alaska and Russia, is one of the world’s two most productive fisheries. But the Arctic region is warming more than twice as fast as the rest of the planet, the report found.

The past two years saw record low levels of sea ice — frozen seawater — floating on the Bering Sea during winter, the report found. And the habitats of fish on which commercial fisheries and indigenous groups depend have shifted northward, according to the report released at the annual meeting of the American Geophysical Union.

“Fishing industries are built around the assumption that fish will be in a certain place at a certain time, but that’s changing in response to a rapidly changing Arctic,” said Waleed Abdalati, an environmental scientist at the University of Colorado-Boulder who was not part of the report. For the first time, the U.S. agency’s annual “Arctic Report Card” includes observations from indigenous groups who hunt and fish in the region.

“We look for the return of the sea ice every fall season,” wrote 10 representatives of the region’s more than 70 indigenous communities. “The ice provides access to seals, whales, walrus, fish, crabs and other marine life for our subsistence harvests.” The communities once saw the ice in the northern Bering Sea during eight months of the year, but now they only see it for three or four months, the report found.

Meanwhile, a new scientific paper published Tuesday in the journal *Nature* found that the melting of Greenland’s ice sheet has accelerated. The melting is now seven times faster than in the 1990s.

Less ice means feeding disruptions for many Arctic species. Polar bears stalk their prey, including seals, on ice. Ivory gulls scavenge on ice for scraps of those hunts, as well as for small fish and other creatures.

“Birds are migrating to the Arctic and not finding the food they need,” said Matthew Druckenmiller, a scientist at the University of Colorado Boulder’s National Snow and Ice Data Center and one of the NOAA report editors. □



This Jan. 18, 2019 file photo shows a cyclist amidst morning smog in New Delhi, India.

Associated Press

Study finds climate simulations are mostly accurate

By **SETH BORENSTEIN**
AP Science Writer

WASHINGTON (AP) — The computer models used to simulate what heat-trapping gases will do to global temperatures have been pretty spot-on in their predictions, a new study found.

After years of hearing critics blast the models’ accuracy, climate scientist Zeke Hausfather decided to see just how good they have been. He tracked down 17 models used between 1970 and 2007 and found that the majority of them predicted results that were “indistinguishable from what actually occurred.”

“By and large our models have gotten it right, plus or minus a little bit,” said Hausfather, a University of California, Berkeley scientist who is climate and energy director at the Breakthrough Institute. “If they get it wrong, it’s slightly on the warm side, but I wouldn’t read too much into that.”

Ten of the 17 were close to the temperatures that actually happened, said Hausfather, lead author of a study in Wednesday’s journal *Geophysical Research Letters*.

But scientists actually got the physics right even more than that, Hausfather said. That’s because they make two main assumptions when they model what will happen in the future. One is the physics of the atmosphere and how it reacts to heat-trapping gases. The other is the amount of greenhouse gases put into the air.

A few times, scientists were wrong in their predictions about the growth of carbon pollution, saying there would be more of the gases than there actually were, Hausfather said. If they got the amount of heat-trapping gases wrong, they then got the temperatures wrong.

So Hausfather and colleagues, including NASA climate scientist Gavin Schmidt, looked at how well the models did on just the pure science, taking out the emissions factor. On that count, 14 of the 17 computer models accurately predicted the future.

The scientists also gave each computer simulation a “skill score” that essentially gave a percentage grade to each one. The average grade was a 69%.

One of the earliest computer models, made in 1970, got a 91%. What’s so impressive about that is that at the time, climate change wasn’t noticeable in the yearly temperature records like it is now, Hausfather said.

Stanford University climate scientist Noah Diffenbaugh, who wasn’t part of the study, called the work creative and the results striking. □

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Eastwood on 'Richard Jewell,' criticism and finding stories

By MARCELA ISAZA

Associated Press

LOS ANGELES (AP) — For his film "Richard Jewell," Clint Eastwood takes aim at the media and federal investigators for what he sees as a rush to judgment after the 1996 Atlanta Olympics bombing. The 89-year-old director calls security guard Richard Jewell's story "a great American tragedy," one he's been trying to tell for five years.

Eastwood's movie recounts the chaotic summer night of the bombing, which killed one woman, and the swirl of confusion that followed. Within a few days, Jewell went from being hailed as a hero, for finding the bomb and reporting it to police, to becoming a prime suspect in the attack. He was cleared of suspicion after three months, and died in 2007 at age 44. "It's always tragic when people run off with half information and don't really have the truth set up in front of them," Eastwood said. "The press is sometimes in a hurry because there's so much competition to be the first to do something." The Atlanta Journal-Constitution, a central character in the film, has disputed the paper's depiction in "Richard Jewell," saying it mis-



This Dec. 5, 2019 photo shows director Clint Eastwood, center, posing with cast members, from left, Kathy Bates, Jon Hamm, Paul Walter Hauser and Sam Rockwell during a portrait session to promote their film "Richard Jewell" at the Four Seasons Hotel in Beverly Hills, Calif.

Associated Press

represents their reporting on the story and their staff's actions.

In an interview alongside his film's star, Paul Walter Hauser, Eastwood spoke with The Associated Press about his struggle to get the film made, finding success in Hollywood despite being an introvert, and criticisms of the film's accuracy.

AP: What were your biggest challenges with this?

Eastwood: Well, the challenge was that four-year period where the frustration of having the project all together right up to the last half an inch and then all of a sudden it fell apart -- and it fell apart partly on my fault, too. You negotiate and you hit a wall. Different studios owned the property. And finally I walked away. Then this last year, I said, "I wonder whatever happened to that? And I

wonder if I could reinstate it?"

AP: How do you hope this film changes the public's perception of Richard Jewell?

Hauser: The hope with this film, other than entertaining an audience -- we're still in the business of entertaining and telling a great story -- but the greater picture, of course, is the echo effect it will have on the public of clearing his name to all

people. And I think that this is a victory lap for the Jewell family, as much as they can have without Richard here with them.

AP: What are you most proud of in your body of work?

Eastwood: Well, I did a one-act play once when I was in high school or junior high school, and I swore I would never do that again. I hated the idea. I was a terribly complex young kid, and the last thing I wanted to do is do an extrovert-ish thing like acting. But then when you get into acting later as an adult, you realize it's not necessarily an extroverted thing. Introverts make great actors because they have a lot of things they're holding in. It's just a question of learning how to get them out into the open.

It's also a funny profession because you don't know where the next thing is happening. You try it even if it has no resemblance to you at all or anything you've ever thought of. It's a fun life, but a lot of it just so happens.

Stories come along. And stories are the king. And you go ahead and try to tell them the best you can. But it's not just not an intellectual art form. It's an emotional art form. □

A\$AP Rocky to perform in Stockholm months after conviction

By DAVID KEYTON

Associated Press

STOCKHOLM (AP) — A\$AP Rocky is back in Sweden. The American rapper is set to perform late Wednesday in Stockholm, where he was convicted of assault in August over a street brawl.

The artist, whose real name is Rakim Mayers, will appear at Stockholm's Ericsson Globe arena.

Following a visit to a school in the suburbs of the Swedish capital earlier in the day, Mayers posted an open invitation to his concert on Instagram.

"Whoever's from the hood, they get in for free," he said in a video that went viral on social media

and has led to queues of youngsters making their way into the capital.

High school student Farnaz Roustaei was in bed when she heard the news on snapchat and succeeded in convincing her mother to let her travel ninety minutes into town. She got her ticket via a link on Mayers' Instagram profile, and while not free, it cost her only 11 krona (1.1 US dollars.)

"I'm so stressed. It's my first concert ever," she said, sharply dressed and with fresh make-up, making her way to join her friends. Concert promoter Live Nation said last month that Mayers scheduled the show "after tremen-



In this file photo dated Monday, Dec. 2, 2019, ASAP Rocky poses for photographers upon arrival at the British Fashion Awards in central London.

Associated Press

dous support from the Swedish fans."

Mayers was arrested

along with his two bodyguards and charged with assault after a 19-year-old

man was hurt in the June 30 fight. He pleaded self-defense, saying he tried to avoid a confrontation with two men who were following his entourage. Mayers and his bodyguards were all convicted but received conditional sentences, sparing them prison time unless they committed similar offenses in the future.

During his return to Stockholm this week, A\$AP Rocky had wanted to entertain inmates at Kromberg prison, the facility where he was held for weeks this summer.

But Sweden's prison board nixed the prison concert, citing logistical and security issues. □

'Parasite,' 'Bombshell' get a boost in SAG nominations

By **JAKE COYLE**
Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) — Scarlett Johansson received two individual nominations, "Parasite" scored a best ensemble nod and both "The Irishman" and "Once Upon a Time ... in Hollywood" solidified their Oscar favorite status in nominations announced Wednesday for the 26th Screen Actors Guild Awards.

The SAG Awards are one of the most closely watched Academy Awards bellwethers because, historically, a best ensemble nomination from the actors is usually a prerequisite for any best-picture contender's resume. Actors make up the largest percentage of the film academy, giving them the greatest influence of any branch. The actors guild, as expect-



This image released by Lionsgate shows Charlize Theron, from left, Nicole Kidman and Margot Robbie in a scene from "Bombshell."

Associated Press

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JUMANJI: THE NEXT LEVEL
DWAYNE JOHNSON | JACK BLACK
WITH SPANISH SUBTITLES
PH MON-THU 6:05 | 7:30 | 8:50
FRI 6:05 | 7:30 | 8:50 | 10:15
SAT 2:00 | 3:20 | 4:45 | 6:05 | 7:30 | 8:50 | 10:15
SUN 2:00 | 3:20 | 4:45 | 6:05 | 7:30 | 8:50

BLACK CHRISTMAS
IMOGEN POOTS | CARY ELWES
WITH SPANISH SUBTITLES
PH MON-FRI 6:25 | 8:40
SAT-SUN 1:55 | 4:10 | 6:25 | 8:40
PBP MON-FRI 5:15 | 7:25 | 9:35
SAT-SUN 1:00 | 3:05 | 5:15 | 7:25 | 9:35

DARK WATERS
MARK RUFFALO | ANNE HATHAWAY
PH MON-FRI 6:45
SAT-SUN 1:50 | 6:45

FROZEN II
KRISTEN BELL | IDINA MENZEL
WITH SPANISH SUBTITLES
PH MON-FRI 6:00 | 8:35
SAT-SUN 3:30 | 6:00 | 8:35
PBP MON-FRI 3:50 | 4:45 | 6:15 | 7:05 | 8:40 | 9:25
SAT-SUN 1:25 | 2:25 | 3:50 | 4:45 | 6:15 | 7:05 | 8:40 | 9:25

Knives Out
DANIEL CRAIG | CHRIS EVANS
WITH SPANISH SUBTITLES
PBP MON-FRI 3:45 | 6:30 | 9:15
SAT-SUN 1:00 | 3:45 | 6:30 | 9:15

21 BRIDGES
CHADWICK BOSEMAN | J.K. SIMMONS
PH MON-FRI 9:30
SAT-SUN 4:30 | 9:30

QUE LEONES
OZUNA | CLARISSA MOLINA
SPANISH
PH MON-THU 6:10 | 8:30
FRI 6:10 | 8:30 | 10:50
SAT 3:50 | 6:10 | 8:30 | 10:50
SUN 3:50 | 6:10 | 8:30
PBP MON-THU 4:50 | 7:05 | 9:20
FRI 4:50 | 7:05 | 9:20 | 11:35
SAT 2:35 | 4:50 | 7:05 | 9:20 | 11:35
SUN 2:35 | 4:50 | 7:05 | 9:20

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ed, nominated both Martin Scorsese's Netflix opus and Quentin Tarantino's Hollywood fable for best ensemble, along with a pair of individual acting nods: Al Pacino and Joe Pesci for "The Irishman" and Leonardo DiCaprio and Brad Pitt for "Once Upon a Time." Each film also added stunt ensemble nominations. But the guild's other choices were less predictable. The SAGs rounded out best ensemble with the casts of Taika Waititi's Nazi Germany coming-of-age tale

"Jojo Rabbit," Jay Roach's Fox News docudrama "Bombshell" and Bong Joon Ho's class satire "Parasite." "Parasite," the much-praised Korean film, became just the second foreign language film to be nominated for the SAGs' top award. Only "Life Is Beautiful" managed to do it before, in 1997. Already one of the year's most critically acclaimed films, "Parasite" looks assured of a rare best-picture nomination for a foreign language

film. Notably missing out on the best ensemble nomination was Noah Baumbach's divorce drama "Marriage Story," which on Monday led the Golden Globe nominations with six nods. It still came away with acting nominations for its leads, Adam Driver and Johansson, and Laura Dern for best female actor in a supporting role. Johansson was nominated in that category, as well, for her performance in "Jojo Rabbit." □

Michelle Obama promotes girls education in Vietnam school

By **HAU DINH**
Associated Press
LONG AN, Vietnam (AP) — Former U.S. first lady Michelle Obama spoke to students at a school in southern Vietnam while promoting education for girls to help reach their full potential.

Obama, accompanied by actresses Julia Roberts and Lana Condor and "Today Show" co-host Jenna Bush Hager, met on Monday with girls at a high school in Long An province by the Mekong delta, where they listened to the students talk about their schoolwork and challenges.

light on you and the work that's going on here ... so that there are people around the world, who understand that when you educate a girl, you'll

give them power and a voice and an opportunity to improve their lives and the lives of their families and the lives of their communities," Obama said. □



Former U.S. first lady Michelle Obama speaks to female students at Can Giuoc high school in Long An province, Vietnam Monday, Dec. 9, 2019.

Associated Press

"We are gonna shine a

Thunberg 'a bit surprised' to be Time 'Person of the Year'

By FRANK JORDANS

Associated Press

MADRID (AP) — Teenage climate activist Greta Thunberg said she was surprised and honored Wednesday to learn she had been named Time's youngest "Person of the Year," saying the accolade deserved to be shared by others in the global movement she helped inspire.

The 16-year-old Swede has become the face of a new generation of activists, drawing large crowds with her appearances at protests and conferences over the past year and a half. Some have welcomed her activism, including her speeches challenging world leaders to do more to stop global warming. But others have criticized her sometimes combative tone.

"For sounding the alarm about humanity's predatory relationship with the only home we have, for bringing to a fragmented world a voice that transcends backgrounds and borders, for showing us all what it might look like when a new generation leads, Greta Thunberg is TIME's 2019 Person of the Year," the media franchise said on its website.

Leaving a U.N. climate



This photo provided by Time magazine shows Greta Thunberg, who has been named Time's youngest "person of the year" on Wednesday, Dec. 11, 2019.

Associated Press

conference in Madrid, Thunberg told The Associated Press she was "a bit surprised" at the recognition. "I could never have imagined anything like that happening," she said in a phone interview.

"I'm of course, very grateful for that, very honored," Thunberg said, but added that "it should be everyone in the Fridays for Future movement because what we have done, we have done together."

Thunberg said she was hopeful that the message being pushed by her and other activists — that governments need to drastically increase their efforts to combat climate change — is finally getting through. But she insisted that the media should also pay attention to other activists, particularly indigenous people who she said "are hit hardest by the climate and environmental crisis," and to the science around global warming.

"That is what I am trying to do, to use my platform to do," she said.

Thunberg said the movement, which has staged repeated worldwide protests attended by hundreds of thousands of people, had managed to spread awareness about the need to urgently reduce planet-warming greenhouse gas emissions and help those already affected by climate change.

"To get in a sense of urgency in the conversation that is very needed right now to be able to move forward," she said.

"That, I think, is our biggest success."

Asked whether she thought world leaders were beginning to respond to this message, Thunberg said:

"They say they listen and they say they understand, but it sure doesn't seem like it."

"If they really would listen and understand then I think they need to prove that by translating that into action," she added.

She said the experience of the past 15 months, going from solo-protester outside the Swedish parliament to speaking in front of world leaders at the U.N. General Assembly, had changed her.

"I think life is much more meaningful now that I have something to do that has an impact," she said.

Thunberg has tried to preserve some privacy despite the relentless interest she's received from media and adoring fans in recent months.

She was mobbed on her arrival in Madrid last week and the attention paid to her appearances at the climate conference has far outstripped that of other events, save for Hollywood stars like Harrison Ford.

"I would like to be left alone," Thunberg said when asked about her plans for the next days. She will later travel home to Sweden, to spend Christmas with her family and dogs, she added. □

Raphael show with famous Madonna paintings opens in Berlin

By KIRSTEN GRIESHABER

Associated Press

BERLIN (AP) — Berlin is opening the first of three Raphael exhibitions this week as the art world celebrates the 500th anniversary of the Renaissance master's death next year. Five paintings of the Virgin Mary and her son that are usually not exhibited in the same space are all on display in one room at the city's Gemaeldegalerie museum. In addition, Raphael's famous "The Madonna of the Pinks" will be on loan from the National Gallery in London for the exhibition called "Raphael in Berlin. The Madonnas of the Gemaeldegalerie."

The six paintings belong

to Raphael's early works from the beginning of the 16th century and depict Madonna and her child in different variations. One shows Jesus on his mother's lap with pink flowers in his hands, another with a goldfinch on his leg. On most of the paintings Mary has a solemn look, as if she already knew about her son's fate.

The exhibition's centerpiece is a tondo, or round painting, called "Teranuova Madonna" from about 1505 that Raphael created shortly after his arrival in Florence. It shows Madonna with her child, surrounded by the infant St. John and an unknown child with a halo.



The painting 'Madonna of the Pinks' of Renaissance artist Raphael from London's National Gallery is on display at an exhibition at the Gemaeldegalerie in Berlin, Wednesday, Germany, Dec. 11, 2019.

Associated Press

"The big Raphael year 2020 is already starting in Berlin in December 2019," the director of the Gemaeldegalerie, Michael Eissenhauer, told report-

ers on Wednesday. "The show gives a precise view on Raphael before he became the star artist at the Vatican."

Raphael was born in 1483

in Urbino and died at the age of 37 in Rome. Together with Michelangelo and Leonardo da Vinci, he is one of the most famous Italian artists of the Renaissance period.

The presentation takes a historical look at the collection of the Berlin museums, showing works by the "young Raphael" that were widely popular when the first museum was founded in the city in 1830. The exhibition also sheds light on the early acquisition policies of the Gemaeldegalerie in the broader context of the history of art collecting in Europe and it shows the image that 19th-century Germany had of Raphael. □

Santa, soldiers bring joy to beleaguered Alaska village

By **MARK THIESSEN**

Associated Press

NAPAKIAK, Alaska (AP) —

A school employee wearing a traditional pink Alaska Native smock called a kuspuk breezed through the hubbub in the cafeteria adorned with murals of purely Alaska scenes, zig-zagging through children clutching presents and past uniformed soldiers wearing Santa caps.

"Napakiak is happy today," she proclaimed to principal Sally Benedict.

That's a rare emotion of late for the 300 or so residents of this western Alaska community. "We're falling into the Kuskokwim River," Benedict explains, because of erosion that is forcing everyone to move their town farther inland.

But for one day this month, the Alaska National Guard gave folks a reason to smile, thanks to its "Operation Santa Claus" program, which featured the jolly old elf himself distributing gifts to the children.

"This lightens the load," said Benedict, a former Detroit educator who arrived last summer. "This is sunshine for us. It's a brightening of our day."

Now in its 63rd year, Operation Santa Claus has become a rarity among National Guard units. Defense officials have shut down the program everywhere but Alaska, where the mission survives because the state is so large and some communities are so remote.

The program started in 1956 when the residents



This Dec. 3, 2019 photo shows Santa Claus arriving in Napakiak, Alaska, on an Alaska National Guard UH-60 Black Hawk helicopter.

Associated Press

of St. Mary's, Alaska, had no money to buy children Christmas presents after flooding severely impacted hunting and fishing. Since then, Guard members try to visit at least two rural communities a year, delivering Christmas gifts and other needed supplies.

They've been to remote burgs with names like Koyukuk, Savoonga, Iliamna, Kwethluk and Tuntuliak. The visit to Napakiak involved two aircraft: a 400-mile (644-kilometer) trip in a small airplane from Anchorage, then a five-minute helicopter ride to the village.

"We love this, we truly love coming here," said Maj. Gen. Torrence Saxe, the adjutant general of the Alaska National Guard



This Dec. 3, 2019, photo shows 6-month-old Rebecca Ilmar having her photo taken with Santa Claus in Napakiak, Alaska.

Associated Press

who found himself topping ice cream sundaes with cherries for the revelers in Napakiak. "This is a proud tradition."

The Guard isn't the only Santa's helper in the nation's largest state.

The Salvation Army is celebrating its 50th year of helping the Guard, collecting gifts, book bags and other items to be distributed. Major corporate sponsors like Costco and Walmart contribute to the program, and Rich Owens for years has provided the ice cream from his Tastee Freez restaurant in Anchorage.

"It's a labor of love," said John Brackenbury, the Alaska divisional commander of The Salvation Army.

Climate change is a contributing factor in the erosion caused by the Kuskokwim, a 700 mile-long (1,125-kilometers) river that becomes an ice highway for travelers in the winter, has been an ongoing problem in Napakiak, but the pace has accelerated in the past few years.

It's a dilemma seen in numerous Alaska communities affected by a warming climate that is thawing

permafrost — permanently frozen soil — and compromising river banks, according to Brian Brettschneider, an associate climate researcher at the University of Alaska Fairbanks' International Arctic Research Center.

"You see this at a number of rivers in western Alaska where the bank stability is so much less than it used to be because the warming temperatures are allowing the banks to just crumble away with even typical river flows," he said.

This year alone, Napakiak's erosion has been responsible for more than 100 feet (30 meters) of lost shoreline. In September, the village school's 10 fuel tanks were relocated by barge across the river to the nearby town of Bethel after being threatened by aggressive riverbank erosion.

Erosion also threatens the school, which sits less than 200 feet (60 meters) feet from the river. The Lower Kuskokwim School District needs to move the school, but local officials say finding money for a new school has been challenging.

River erosion also threatened Napakiak's firehouse and city garage, so those structures were moved in July.

The village also has applied for permits to relocate the boat harbor, which was destroyed by storms in May. The five-year plan, Benedict said, is to move everyone to the other side of an air strip.

But at least for one day, the residents of Napakiak didn't have to worry about the erosion creeping ever closer to their homes, and instead could focus on the smiles or even smudges of chocolate from the ice cream sundaes on their children's faces.

Marcus Billy thought he received a basketball, but he became a little confused when he saw it was lime green and not orange. It was only when all the wrapping paper was off that he was sure. When asked if he was happy with that, he said, "Yeah!" before running off to play. □



This Dec. 3, 2019, photo shows Krysta Lexie Kau'aaq, left, Michelle Nelson, middle and Jessilyn Oscar, right, admire the gifts they got from Santa Claus during his visit to Napakiak, Alaska.

Associated Press